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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

# From Nomadism to Sedentary Agriculture at Saddle Lake: the forced settlement of five Cree first nations

by

ANDRE LAFLEUR

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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IN

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## Abstract

The approach to historical geography used in this thesis takes the frontier and dependency theories as a framework within which to examine aboriginal-European economic interaction in the Saddle Lake region of Treaty Six (1876) before and after the treaty negotiations up to 1930. The role of the Canadian Government through the Department of Indian Affairs is emphasized throughout the thesis. Summary documentation of pre-treaty, treaty and post-treaty claims and surrenders include forced relocation, land surrender, economic restriction, and forced sedentarianism. The legal intent of the thesis is to clarify the burden and benefit of responsability related to the fiduciary obligations of the Canadian federal government towards the treaty economy of Canadian First Nations.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Francis Sitwell, for his constant reconstruction of my work; my advisors, Dr. Olive Dickason from the Department of History for her syntax of my documentative style and Dr. Ivan Smith, for devoted support since the beginning of my graduate work in the department. I am also grateful to Wieslaw Michalak for having provided me access to his MTS thesis production files. I would lastly like to extend many thanks to the Saddle Lake First Nation Council for their approval of this research work orientation.

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## I. Introduction

This study will examine the socio-economic transformation of Saddle Lake First Nation, a Cree community in east-central Alberta during the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Saddle Lake First Nation is today comprised of the two bands of Saddle Lake and Goodfish Lake. The fusion of original bands into Saddle Lake First Nation also includes the bands of Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic and Blue Quill as well as some members of Pass-Pass-Chase's band.

The evolutionary changes that occurred in the relations between the bands and their members, in general, during pre-treaty and post-treaty times, can be described by analysing the sequence of changes that took place in two sets of patterns, broadly understood. The first set is the change in the spatial patterns created by the bands from the nomadism of pre-European contact times to the highly restricted conditions on the reserves established by the Canadian government. The second set represents the patterns of cultural dislocation that took place as the bands were brought under the jurisdiction and control of Euro-Canadian society and of its local and remote agents in particular. The general pattern of changes in occupance and in dislocation for band members of Saddle Lake First Nation is representative of the experience of many other Indian bands in Canada.

In summary, the sequence of changes consisted of the transformation of independent bands of nomadic hunters and gatherers into dependent populations of individuals whose liberty of movement was severely restricted. It was the explicit intention of the agents who brought about this forced evolution that the Indians would become 'farmers'. Their actual achievement was to turn them into unemployed and underemployed semi-paupers who obtained a partial subsistence from farming. This thesis will trace the steps by which both the intended and unintended changes were brought about.

For convenience of analysis and presentation, the transformation is divided into the following stages:

1. pre-1750: nomadic occupance
2. 1750-1850: early European contact nomadic occupance
3. 1850-1890: late European contact nomadic dislocation
4. 1890-1930: sedentary occupance

In the detailed presentation that forms the body of the thesis, there will be some overlapping in the time periods. However, the adoption of this sequence in the context of the general local culture of Saddle Lake First Nation provides a working model that can reveal the broader regional and national relationships that developed between the Cree Nation and the British and Canadian governments.

At the heart of this thesis lies the issue of nationhood. The members of Saddle Lake First Nation assert, as their own name attests, that their ancestors formed a

nation before the arrival of Europeans, and that they themselves form a nation today. The primary document of agreement between Saddle Lake First Nation and the Canadian government is Treaty Six which was negotiated and signed in 1876. One of the major sources of difficulties between the native peoples and the Canadian government is that the former see the numbered treaties signed in the years 1871 (Treaty 1) to 1921 (Treaty 11) as being international treaties negotiated between sovereign nations, while the latter has generally asserted that the native peoples were clearly subjects of the British crown at the time the treaties were signed, and as such not foreign nations.

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 also holds significance to Saddle Lake First Nation as an international aboriginal policy of the British government considering the relatively rapid rate of European trade extensions which reached the North Saskatchewan River region some 14 years before the Royal Proclamation was declared.

Given the complexity of this single issue, nationhood, various theories have emerged to explain its origins and continuity. Amongst others, two approaches, the frontier theory and the dependency theory, have been developed and studied by researchers and writers to explain the national and international economy of nations as processes and patterns of colonialism and imperialism throughout the world. Diametrically opposed in their arguments, they have also been both used to explain and/or justify the

interaction of aboriginal and European peoples in North America.

The Australian frontier was also characterized by British colonial policy but its legal nature was less explicit than in North America. In Australia, no treaties were negotiated between the aboriginal peoples and the British government and few statutes were enacted by the colonial government because the government refused "to recognize any legal obligation on the crown to take cognizance of aboriginal rights based on customary native tenure as "their relationship with land could not be characterized as a proprietary interest"".[1] While the aboriginal people were acknowledged to have "some rights at common law", their title carried the right of 'qualified' or 'modified' dominion over the land, to the extent, at least, of occupation or enjoyment of the land, which is consistent with the crown's right of pre-emption".[2] Because the colonial government's pre-emptive rights could only be exercised under common law, aboriginal people could only be made to extinguish their rights on consent, by compensation or by statutory legislation.

The failure to recognize, on the part of the colonial government, aboriginal communal title to land, was inherently rooted in the premise of the British crown to assume, by conquering or by peaceful settlement, the sovereign right to regulate the aboriginal peoples in all aspects of their lives, including the use of land.

The dependency theory was developed by early socialist writers including Sismonde de Sismondi (1819), Flora Tristan (1834), William Howitt (1838), and Karl Marx (1859) to explain the unequal relationship which existed within the colonial and imperialist structures of capitalism. George Kupfer (1981) summarises Johan Galtung (1978) in his interpretation of the origin of dependency:

> Exploitation comes from the terms of trade and exchange... there are those in the periphery whose products are unasked for and who cannot enter the market with sufficient buying power. Thus, being neither producers, nor consumers, they are thoroughly made marginal by a system which actually produces two types of peripheries: exploited and marginalized. Underdevelopment in this context comes not from an imbalance in human and natural resources, but is a product of the economic structure.[3]

Given the parameters of this economic inequality as expressed above, one can document the historical unfolding of a dependency relationship that developed between the aboriginal people and the Euro-Canadian capitalist class as the capitalist core emerged and expanded its mode (technology) and means (labour) of production into the exploited sectors of the rural and urban economies of ceded and unceded territories within Canada.

The dependency theory has similar structures of explanation to those found in the staple economy theory developed primarily by Harold Innis (1930) in his book, The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History. According to Wallace Clement and Daniel Drache (1978), the following elements of the dependency theory are found in the discussion of the staple economy:

> The development of productive forces at the margin will follow the developments in the imperial centre; in short, the imperial power selects those staples which it requires on terms favourable to itself; The relations between the centre and margin are further distorted by unequal trade relations, heavy fixed overhead cost and the constant outflow of capital in the form of investment income to foreign financial centres.[4]

In contrast to the dependency theory, the frontier theory has emphasized the democratic egalitarianism of changes to society that were alleged to have occurred in step with the historical evolution of the economy of North America.

The frontier theory was developed by Frederick Turner (1898) and other authors including E.F. Oliver (1914-15), W.A. Mackintosh (1934), Robert England (1936), Arthur Morton (1938), Allan Harper (1946, 1947), J.G. MacGregor(1948), Morris Zaslow (1948), Eckart Ehlers (1966), John Hudson (1969), D.A. McQuillan (1982), and J. Egerbladh (1982).

According to Ehlers, Turner identified four social phases in western frontier evolution:

1. White explorers and hunters who temporarily lived in aboriginal territory.
2. Merchants and traders who established semi-permanent posts in aboriginal territory.
3. Cattle breeders and pioneer farmers who formed the first group of permanent settlers.
4. The growth of towns and industrialisation.[5]

While accepting the concept of aboriginal right to territory, the turnerian group of authors are concerned, to the exclusion of almost every other consideration, with the conversion of "wilderness" to "civilisation". Implicit in this interpretation of events is the image of an "empty" territory, in the cartesian sense, that becomes occupied and democratised. Moreover, the success of the transference of democracy to the west was only made possible through capitalist expansion on the frontier.

Even though the frontier was regarded as an exemplary example of democratic integration in Turner's opinion, his theory has left little room for an explanation of how the aboriginal people were exploited and ignored as actual contributors to the progress of existing North American culture at that time.

While it is true that Turner's concept of frontier phases could have occurred sequentially in certain isolated regions, their periodicity more often than not overlapped so

that phases 1 and 2 occurred simultaneously as did 3 and 4 in some places, while in yet other circumstance, 1,2,3, and 4 occurred simultaneously. Thus, the frontier, as Turner described it, may still be here, but not only in stage four as some may want to believe.

Historically, the prevailing attitude of pre-twentieth and early twentieth century Europeans and Euro-Canadians about aboriginal peoples has been one of a dichotomous and segregated relationship where Europeans were regarded as 'civilized' and aboriginal people as 'barbaric'. Therefore, any European discussion of aboriginal integration as equal participants in the Euro-North-American economy was 'irrelevant' because the aboriginal people practised a 'primitive stateless' economy and polity which was 'inferior' to the progress of a European state economy and polity.[6]

This perspective of intercultural relations also extended to such writers as Friedrich Engels (1884). In Origin of Family, Private Property and State, Engels wrote that:

> The Iroquois Confederacy was the most advanced social organisation attained by the Indians who had not emerged from the lower stage of barbarism (that is excepting the Mexicans, New Mexicans, and Peruvians).[7]

While now acknowledged to be factually inaccurate, the statement conveys the attitude that prevailed even among

forward-looking European intellectuals. In other words, the recognition of the validity of aboriginal rights to land and to international economic self-determination was effectively non-existent amongst the vast majority of early writers who studied European-Indian social and trade relations. The ongoing occurrence of land cession treaties followed by controlling legislation such as the Canadian government's Indian Act were thus perceived as necessary procedures in the progress of civilization rather than as cultural dysfunctions that were linked to unresolved European and Euro-Canadian-Indian land claims.

Recent criticism of the dependency theory has also found that not enough social research is being oriented towards resolving the social conflict existing because of colonialism, imperialism, and military capitalism. Michaela von Freyhold (1987), points out in the Review of African Political Economy, that:

> Dependency theory lends itself politically to all those who seek economistic and technological solutions to development problems rather than social and political solutions.
>
> The role of the rules classes [sic] and subordinated social groups is merely seen as that of victims, not of actors that take part in the creation of the system. Too often, this type of analysis is not aware that the functionality of certain phenomena to the maintenance of a certain economic system does

not explain how these phenomena developed nor why and how they are reproduced.[8]

The resurgence of interest in aboriginal peoples throughout the world in the last 20 years has thus provided an 'opportunity' for researchers , both native and non-native, to explore the aboriginal culture in the contexts of their intra and extra-interactions with dominant societies.

Writers supportive of the aboriginal peoples have developed explanations that run parallel to the arguments of the dependency theory and such authors have largely adopted a position opposite to that of the frontier theory. Their writings reflect a consensus that the European economy (i.e. capitalism) was largely responsible for the economic subjugation of aboriginal people.

Native writers such as Harold Cardinal (1969, 1977), and Vine Deloria (1969, 1985) have powerfully argued for the recognition of aboriginal rights in Canada, in the United States and around the world. These two authors are leading voices in the new political assertiveness of native people.

Other notable academic Canadian aboriginal writers who have preceded or followed Harold Cardinal's work include Waubageshig (1970), William Wuttunee (1971), Wilfred Pelletier (1973), Edward Ahenakew (1973), Howard Adams (1974, 1985), George Manuel (1974), James Burke (1976), Chief John Snow (1977), Joe Dion (1979), Albina Jacknife (1979), Harry Daniels (1979, 1981), Delia Opekakew (1980,

1987), and Henry Bird Quinney and Eric Robinson (1985). These authors deal with historical and contemporary documentative analysis; two of them, Ahenekew and Dion, particularly emphasize the role of traditional Indian culture in their writings. Their approach is similar to that of Eleanor Brass (1985, 1987) from Saskatchewan and Victoria Calihoo (1959), a well-known Iroquois writer who was born and raised in central Alberta.

Much writing about aboriginal peoples has also emerged from Euro-Canadian academic institutions in recent years and aboriginal authors have not failed to contribute correspondingly. Raoul McKay (1973) and Richard Daniel (1977) are two graduate student authors who have researched and written about Indian people and land claims in Canada. Other graduate students, albeit non-native, who have written about aboriginal rights include Kathryn Kozak (1971) and John Taylor (1975).

Other professional writers and academics who have emerged, amongst others in the field of historical literature about aboriginal culture include Lucien and Jane Hanks (1950), F.E. LaViolette (1961), Jennifer Brown (1975), Rene Fumoleau (1976), Roland Wright (1976), Thomas Berger (1977, 1982), Robin Fisher (1977), Rolf Knight (1978), Richard Price (ed.), (1979), Hugh Brody (1981), Daniel Raunet (1984), and Bradford Morse (ed.), (1985).

All of these authors have supported in principle the aboriginal cause of peaceful and prosperous co-existence

with Euro-Canadians. Their writings reflect a conscious consensus that the European economy (i.e. capitalism) has been largely responsible for the economic exploitation and marginalisation of the aboriginal people.

This thesis will delve into the socio-economic transformation of Saddle Lake First Nation in the context of the theories of political economy outlined above. However, the limitations of these theories should be recognized by the reader in interpreting the historical evidence specifically presented in this work.

The body of the work is divided into five chapters. Following the introduction, chapter two documents the traditional geographical territory and economic culture of the North Saskatchewan River Cree. The influx of European and Euro-Canadian explorers and traders in the late eighteenth century, by virtue of the HBC Charter (1670) and the Royal Proclamation, is discussed as well as the subsequent plans by the Canadian government to exploit and occupy the northwest aboriginal territories of North America. The chapter concludes with the circumstances surrounding the negotiations of Treaty Six in 1876 between the Cree, Stoney, and Assiniboine councils on the one hand, and the Canadian government on the other.

Chapter three outlines the concept and implementation of treaties between nations and focusses principally on Treaty Six. The application of the Indian Act oriented toward containing the aboriginal people on reserves

following the acceptance of treaty is also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter four documents the implementation of the terms of the treaty and the Indian Act at Saddle Lake through the Department of Indian Affairs. The chapter encompasses a nine-year period from 1876 until 1885 when Cree and Metis of the newly ceded territory rose against the Canadian government.

Chapters five and six analyse the socio-economic interaction between the people of Saddle Lake and the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) during the 45 years subsequent to the rebellion, 1886 to 1930.

The concluding chapter, seven, summarizes the discussion of chapters two to six in the context of the theories presented above. In the concluding chapter, specific observances of the historical evidence presented will be brought forth. Thus, the introductory and concluding chapters present the problems and an approach to explaining the historical pattern of aboriginal-European economic interaction that developed between Saddle Lake First Nation and the British and Canadian governments during pre-European, European and post-European contact periods.

Notes

1. Geoffrey Lester and Graham Parker, 1973, "Land Rights: The Australian Aborigines Have Lost a Legal Battle But...", Alberta Law Review, Vol. II, p. 195

2. Lester and Parker, 1973, p. 189

3. George Kupfer, 1981, A Social and Economic Overview of Northern Alberta. Co-West Associates. Edmonton. p. 48

4. Wallace Clement and Daniel Drache, 1978, A Practical Guide to Canadian Political Economy, Toronto, pp. 11-12

5. Eckart Ehlers, 1966, "The Expansion of Settlement in Canada: A Contribution to the Discussion of the American Frontier" in Geographische Rundschau, Vol. 18 (9). p. 327

6. Kathleen Jamieson, 1978, Indian Women and the Law in Canada, Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Ottawa, p. 27, noted about Canadians at the time of pre-confederation Indian legislation (1857, 1868): "Attitudes in Canada were hardening in proportion to the increasing pressures of European settlement. The problems of the Indians were beginning to be viewed more and more as the result not of depredations on their land by Europeans but of Indian improvidence and lack of "progress"."

7. Frederick Engels, 1884, "Origins of Family, Private Property and State", Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, 1970, Selected Works, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 517

8. Michaela von Freyhold, 1987, 'Labour Movements or Popular Struggles in Africa', Review of African Political Economy,

No. 39, pp. 24-25

## II. Chapter 2

### Pre-Treaty History

The origins of the Cree band of Saddle Lake are both geographically widespread and of ancient time. At least 9,000 years ago, the traditional territory occupied by the Saddle Lake band was inhabited by aboriginal hunters and gatherers.[1] It is difficult to determine the ancestral evolution of the people of the region because this knowledge is in many ways hidden within the secrets of ancient North American history.[2]

The relation of Cree to the Algonquian family which includes Montagnais, Siksika, Kainai, Peigan, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Ojibway, Micmac, Abenaki, and Ottawa, amongst other nations, suggests that a northward migration of Algonquian-speaking nations probably occurred sequentially with the retreat of the ice-sheet in the last glacial ice-age (Figure 2.1).[3] The evolution of a linguistic distinction within the Algonquian languages still remains unclear but the Cree-speaking people became the dominant group within the Algonquian family of languages.[4]

The prevailing European theories of territorial evolution of the Cree Nation suggest that a western expansion originating within the Hudson Bay region was beginning at the time the European fur trade began, and that as a result of trade contact with the Hudson's Bay Company of England and with French traders during the mid-seventeenth century and thereafter, this expansion

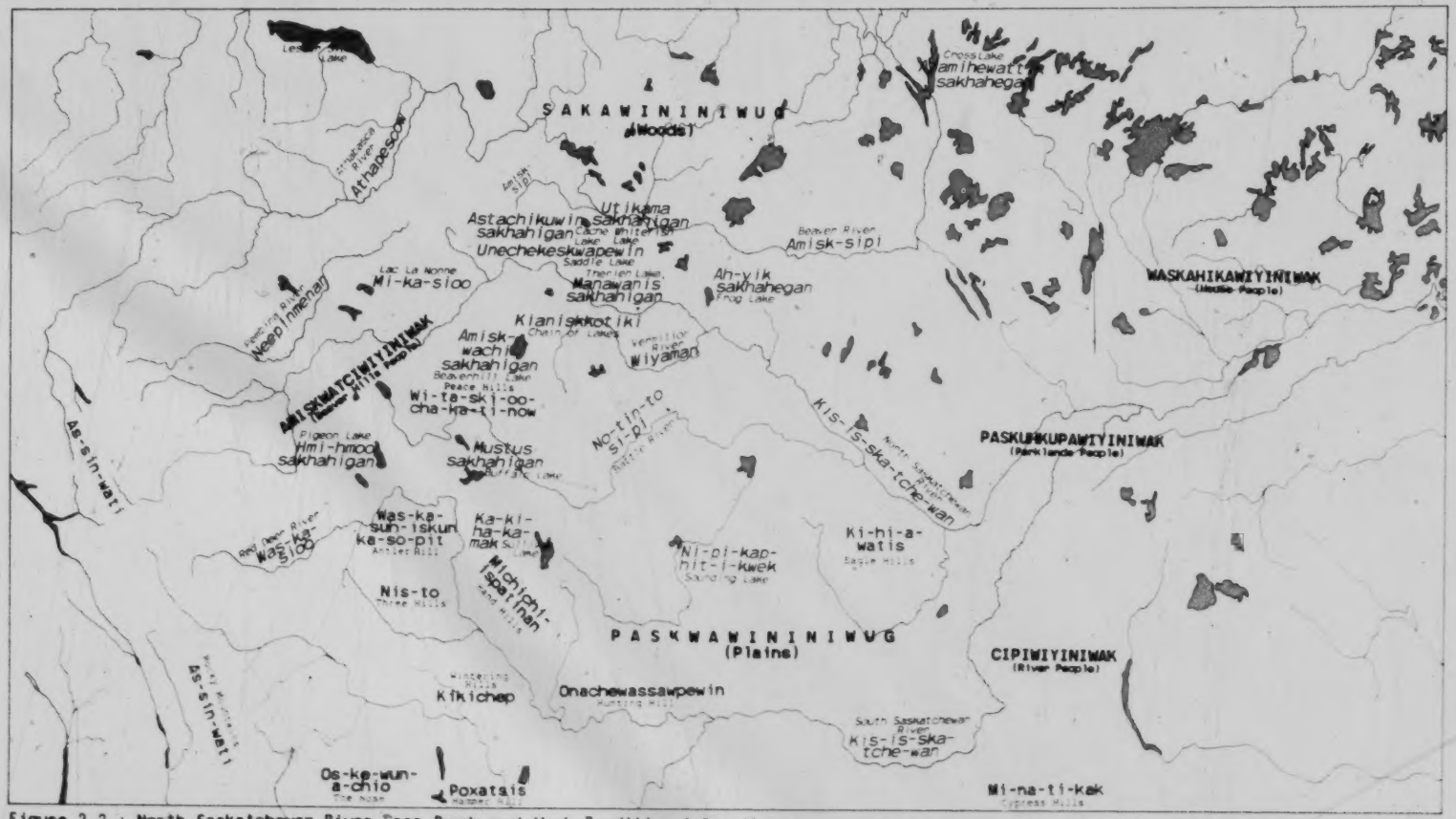


Figure 2.2 : North Saskatchewan River Cree Bands and their Traditional Territory
Source : Mandlebaum (1979), Holmgren (1972)

greatly accelerated.[5] This contact encouraged the diffusion of the Cree middlemen who bartered European goods for furs harvested by inland tribes.

The ancestral history of the Cree would thus place their origin in present-day northern Quebec and Ontario. From this locus, the Cree expanded inland to encompass a wide and long geographical region ranging from Labrador and the St. Lawrence River valley in Quebec to the North Saskatchewan River valley as the most westward and most recent territory of occupation.[6]

According to Mandlebaum (1979), the traditional distribution of Cree bands along the Saskatchewan River valleys included *waskahikanwiyiniwak*, the House People who inhabited the forest region north-west of the North and South Saskatchewan River confluence (Figure 2.2).[7] Their territory extended into the forest and plains where winter trapping and summer hunting took place respectively. The Parklands People, *paskuhkupawiyiniwak*, who now comprise the Duck Lake bands in Saskatchewan, were located along the South Saskatchewan River valley, while the River People, *cipiwiyiniwak*, extended their territory between the North Saskatchewan and Battle Rivers. Their range followed the buffalo as far west as the Beaver Hills and as far south as the South Saskatchewan River.[8] The westernmost bands included *natimiwiyiniwak*, the Upstream People and *amiskwatciwiyiniwak*, the Beaver Hills People. These bands had the largest populations and their hunting territory

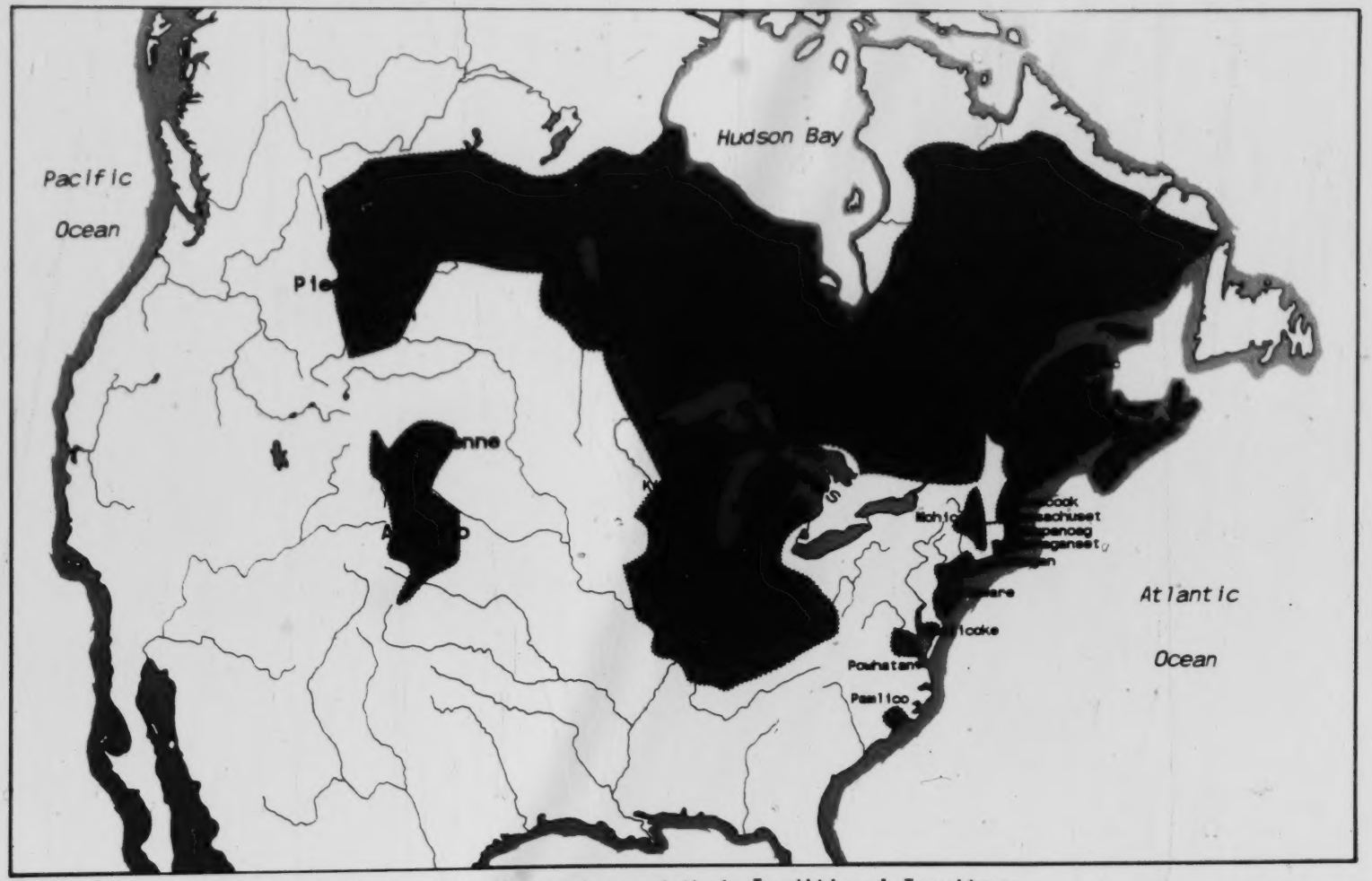


Figure 2.1 : Algonquian Nations of North America and their Traditional Territory
Source : Frederick Hodge (1912)Handbook of Indians of Canada, Geographic Board of Canada, pp. 14-15

along the North Saskatchewan and Battle Rivers brought them into contact with the Blackfoot Confederacy. The descendants of these bands include the present-day bands of Ermineskin, Samson, Louis Bull, Montana, Wabamun, Enoch, Alexis, and Saddle Lake.[9]

While entire tribal migrations rarely took place, the migration patterns of bands were seasonally established by buffalo movements. During late spring and early summer, the bands followed the buffalo south into the South Saskatchewan River region and further south in mid to late summer to the Grand Coteau of the Missouri River.[10] Large semi-permanent encampments were established in the plains where the hunt on horseback or on foot took place.[11] Natural traps such as marshes and cliffs were used when possible. In autumn, the buffalo migrated northward into the parklands and hill regions of the North Saskatchewan and Qu'appelle River valleys. The bands would camp there and would use the chute and pound methods to trap the buffalo.[12]

Buffalo were the mainstay of the plains and parklands Cree diet but many other animals as well as numerous plants, both wild and cultivated, were eaten. Moose and elk were hunted but were more difficult to stalk since their range was primarily limited to the forested regions. Deer were also hunted by use of decoys.[13] Traps and snares were used for wolves, coyotes, badgers, lynx, rabbits, and gophers. While the men carried out the big game hunting, women and children hunted small mammals and birds and gathered plants

and also eggs found along lake shores.[14] Fish was eaten only when the hunt was not successful, although, in the late 1800's, with the gradual disappearance of game, fish became more of a staple.

Regular contact between the Saddle Lake people and the Euro-Canadian traders and explorers dates from before 1789 when a Euro-Canadian trading fort was built at Moose Lake by the NWC (Figure 2.3).[15] HBC built a second trading fort (Buckingham House) three years later on the North Saskatchewan River near present-day Elk Point; it remained active until 1801. By this time, three other forts were operating in the Saddle Lake region. Ft. Augustus (NWC) and Ft. Edmonton (HBC) were constructed in 1795 near present-day Ft. Saskatchewan, and Ft. de l'Isle (HBC) was established near present-day Myrnam in about 1799. Forts Augustus and Edmonton continued to function until 1802. In 1810, eight years later, Ft. Edmonton reopened with another trading fort, Ft. White Earth (NWC), near Smoky Lake. Within two years, they were closed and the major trading locus returned to the present-day Edmonton area.

The traders brought a significant number of eastern Iroquois into the Saddle Lake region who came as employees but who often stayed as independents (freemen). Most of the Iroquois eventually settled in the vicinity of Lac Ste. Anne, Calihoo and westwards into the foothills and Rocky Mountains.[16]

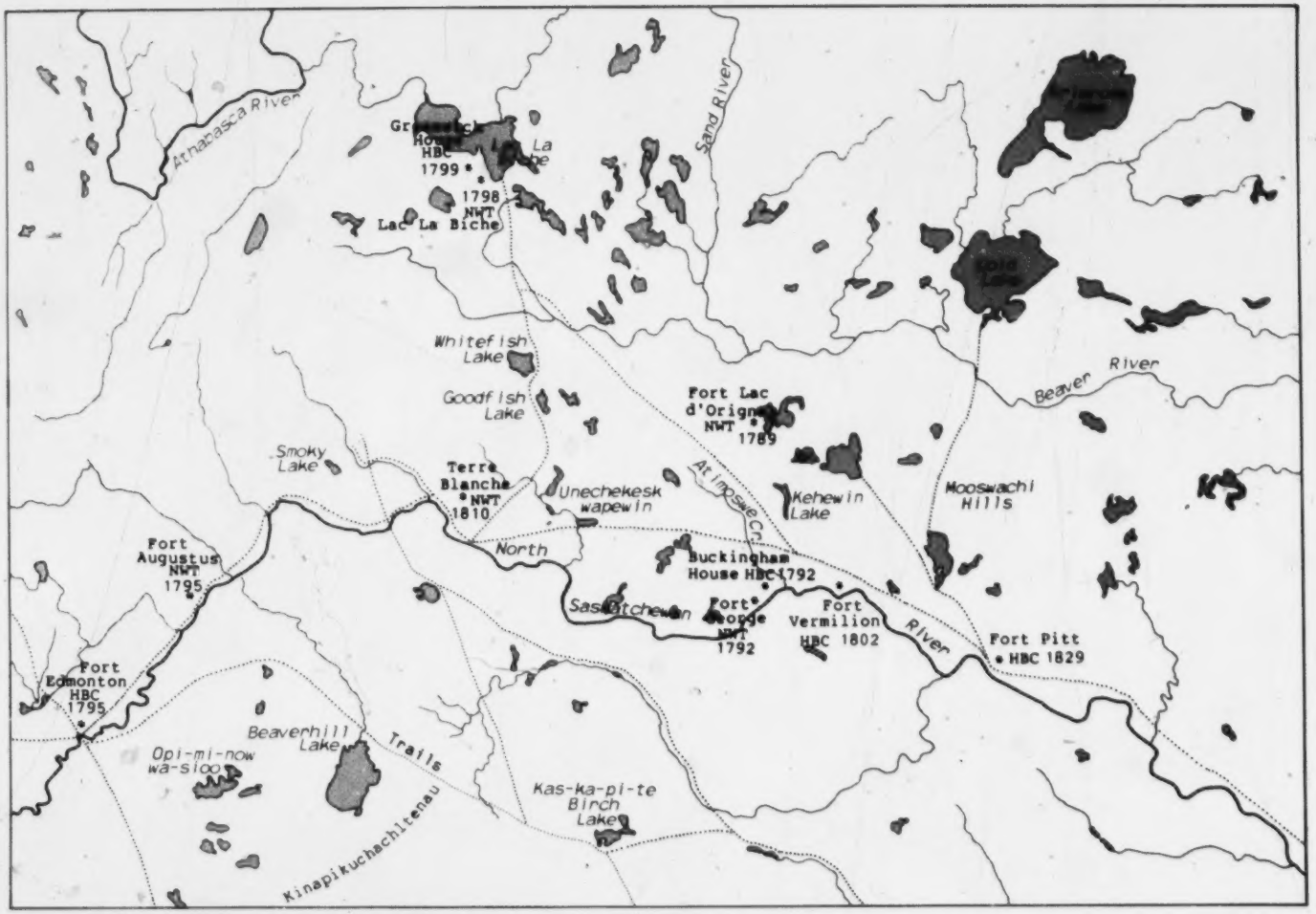


Figure 2.3 : Euro-Canadian Fur Trading Forts of the Saddle Lake Region
Source : R. Cole Harris (1987) (ed.) Historical Atlas of Canada,
Vol. 1, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Plate 62

This commercial expansion into the North American hinterland had already reduced animal numbers significantly in certain areas.[17] The Indian people were thus forced to rely more and more on European goods instead of on traditional goods produced from the buffalo, caribou, moose and other animals. Daniel Harmon, a Hudson's Bay Company employee, wrote of the Saskatchewan Cree and Ojibwa in 1801:

> The Indians in this quarter have been so long accustomed to use European goods, that it would be with difficulty that they could now obtain a livelihood without them. Especially do they need firearms, with which to kill their game, and axes, kettles, knives, etc. They have almost lost the use of bows and arrows, and they would find it nearly impossible to cut their wood with implements made of stone or wood.[18]

This dependency still increased the pressure on animal populations since beaver pelts and other animal hides were in high demand by the traders. Unfortunately for the Indian producers, their furs were undervalued in the trade despite the high demand. About the pricing, Arthur Ray (1980) notes:

> Another aspect of Indian complaints cannot be overlooked. These criticisms were part of the bargaining ploys the Indians used to pressure the traders to lower the prices of goods. Since this strategy was most effective when European trading rivalries were strong, there should perhaps be some

> correlation between the frequency of Indian complaints and the intensity of English-French competition.[19]

After 1821, the HBC was the only trading company operating in northwestern North America, but by 1849, the Metis began to assert their independent trading status. In addition, a growing number of independent traders from the United States were aggressively competitive. The Oregon Treaty of 1846 had secured the 49th parallel as the boundary between British and American land claims.[20] The exclusionism of the Euro-American treaty also implied that Indian and Metis people would be largely ignored and prevented from participating equitably in the expansion plans that would occur amongst Europeans, Euro-Canadians and Euro-Americans who invested in or moved to the west. In 1859, John Palliser, a British Government explorer wrote :

> ...it is impossible for the HBC to provide a government to meet the exigencies of a growing colony. Indians they can govern well through the medium of the trading shop; but the interests of a commercial community, which at all events must be adverse to their own, would not be likely to prosper under their own.[21]

The introduction of Christian missions into the Cree Nation in the North Saskatchewan River region began concomitantly with these expansion plans. In 1840, a Wesleyan minister arrived at Ft. Edmonton. The Catholics

quickly followed with an Oblate priest in 1842. The Saddle Lake region did not have a permanent mission until thirteen years later when, in 1855, Henry Bird Steinhauer began his work at Whitefish Lake.[22] A second mission was established by a Methodist minister, M. Woolsey at Smoky Lake in 1862. Chief Pakan and his Whitefish Lake would seasonally camp here but their nomadic way of life kept them protected from the full impact of the missionaries' teachings. A second Methodist mission was established at Victoria in 1863 and the HBC opened a trading post here the following year. Victoria eventually became, over the next forty years, an important half-breed community. In 1872, Reverend G.M. Grant described Victoria as follows:

> "The log houses of the English and Scotch half-breeds intermingled with the tents of the Crees, extend in a line from this west end along the bank of the river, each man having a frontage on the river, and his grain planted in a little hollow that runs behind the houses. The farming is on a very limited scale, as the men prefer hunting buffalo, fishing or freighting from the company to steady agricultural labour. The settlement is seven years old and consists now of between twenty and thirty families of half-breeds and from ten to a hundred tents of Crees, according to the time of the year... Mr. McDougall... selected the place as a mission field because the Crees resorted to it."[23]

Victoria was strategic in that it was located at the river point where the bands, including that of Chief Pakan from the Whitefish Lake area, sometimes crossed to camp on the plains at the time of the hunts.[24] Similarly, the Catholics in 1868 selected *Kamabesuteweyak*, about fifteen miles downstream from Victoria, as a mission site because it was the main ford across the North Saskatchewan River for the bands of Lac La Biche, Whitefish Lake and Saddle Lake.[25] This mission, which was moved to White Earth River in 1873, was called St. Paul des Cris. [26]

The rivalry between these missions and the traders, as well as between the missions themselves became an issue for the missionaries.[27] Father Albert Lacombe noted in his memoirs that the HBC had complained about the Catholic mission at *kamabesuteweyak* because it hampered the trading pattern in the trading fort areas of Ft. Pitt and Victoria. This competitiveness was carried out onto the plains where the missionaries accompanied the bands who were willing to have them in their company.

According to Constantine Scollen, an Oblate missionary who signed Treaty Six at Fort Carlton, bands of ten to twenty families would visit the St. Paul des Cris mission in the fall. They would stay two to three days and then continue on to Saddle Lake. By November, most bands would return to the plains to meet in the vicinity of Sandy (Sable) Lake and Birch Lake where up to one hundred lodges (seven to eight hundred people) would be located (Figure

2.3).[28] Chiefs and bands mentioned by Scollen include Siyekimat, Alexis (Kiskayu-Piche/Bobtail), Jean-Baptiste (Kasikusiweyaniw/Ermineskin), Albert Kiyiwin, Okimas, Papakines, and Sweetgrass.[29] These bands were comprised of approximately thirty to forty lodges each. Their nomadic range was extensive and included the regions of the Beaver Hills to the west and the Battle River to the south and east (Figure 2.2).[30]

Despite the strong cultural ties that the nomadic bands had with each other, Indian and Euro-Canadian people occasionally inter-married in the Saddle Lake region and by the mid 1870s, a number of Metis children could be found residing at or near the fur trading posts at Victoria and Lac La Biche. The Saddle Lake people were thus effectively involved in cross-cultural relationships but labour and trade relations were difficult because of Euro-Canadian policies. While the Euro-Canadian and European servants held the most comfortable and remunerative positions the Metis and Indian people were relegated to manual work and thus to the low end of the economic scale. In 1840, the Governor of the HBC, George Simpson wrote: "I think we must endeavour to reduce the complement of servants in some of the districts, substituting Indian labour at a low price for the labour of whites, to whom particularly Canadian, we must give increased wages".[31] A later Governor, James Hargrave, wrote in 1871 : "As a class, the Portage La Loche tripmen rank very low indeed in the colony. They are principally French

half-breeds and Indians".[32]

Besides trapping and food provisioning, Indian and Metis were hired to transport freight by water and portage or by overland routes and to supply secondary production goods such as canoes. Given the economic imbalance in power that existed between the Indian and the European peoples, the Indian and Metis were, more often than not, bonded in a debt-labour system which enriched the Euro-Canadian corporate structure.[33]

The relatively rapid rate of transformation of their ancestral landscape by European entrepreneurs increasingly undermined traditional lifestyles of the Amerindians of the region. Critical decisions regarding the defense of their territory would have occurred for the bands when expeditions of Europeans and Euro-Canadians began to explore for possible exploitation of the region's natural resources. These groups included the Palliser and Hind expeditions of 1857 and the overlander expeditions of the 1860's, as well as the surveys of Sandford Fleming, engineer-in-chief of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for railway routes in 1873 and William Butler for Canadian military reconnaissance in 1871.[34] The influx of American traders and resource exploiters, ranging from buffalo hunters to miners, also pressured aboriginal life in the North Saskatchewan River region during this time. American corporations such as I. G. Baker came north and competed against the HBC in general trade.[35] Their connections with whiskey traders, wolvers and

mercenary groups added considerably to regional tension.

By 1870, the frontier situation had become chaotic and a restructuring of Indian territorial defenses had become necessary. With the transformation of Louis Riel's provisional government of Red River into the Province of Manitoba in 1870, the arrival of the Canadian military under Col. Garnet Wolseley further increased regional instability since now, white military and mercenary groups had invaded the northwest from the east and the south, respectively. This military presence in Manitoba caused a major exodus of the Red River Metis into the interior. In a letter to the Secretary of State for the Provinces in Ottawa, the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, A. G. Archibald, stated:

> The people of the neighborhood were very anxious to have the Indians disperse. They are very poor and so long as they remained, levied tribute upon the settled Indians, half-breeds and whites of the settlement, and after getting a promise from them to separate, I engaged to see them in the spring to conclude a Treaty with them of some kind. I used the fact that the small-pox is at the moment prevailing most extensively on the Saskatchewan and that a case of it had occurred at Portage La Prairie... as an argument to induce them to leave.[36]

The need to negotiate a treaty between the Indian people and the Canadian government was mutually desired but the presence of mercenary groups in the interior of the plains

pressured free movement for all plains and parkland bands. Concerns were expressed by the North Saskatchewan River Cree that their territory would be taken over without any form of compensatory agreement:

> As early as April 1871, Cree Chiefs representing the district between Carlton and Edmonton, had met with Mr. W. J. Christie, who was in charge of the Saskatchewan district for the Hudson Bay Company. At the meeting, the Chiefs had requested that Mr. Christie send personal messages from them (Chiefs Sweetgrass, Kehewin, Little Hunter and Kiskayo) expressing their uneasiness and concern for their people.[37]

It is also known that Sweetgrass travelled to Ottawa in the summer of 1871 to bring to the attention of the Canadian government, the Cree Nation's demand for a negotiated settlement.[38] His contact with Indian nations such as the Chippewa and Ottawa in Ontario would have helped Sweetgrass to understand the intricacies of government manipulation. The Crees' recourse to diplomatic means was, however, held in abeyance if not entirely disregarded and the militarily controlled treaty process moved systematically across the prairies from 1871 (Treaty One) to 1875 (Treaty Five). Directly following the Canadian Treaty Commissions, dominion surveyors began to section the landscape into square townships.

Another request to the Lt. Gov. of Manitoba to begin negotiations for a treaty in the North Saskatchewan region was made by Chief Pakan in 1872. Pakan wished to meet Archibald as shown in the following petition:

> to anticipate any arrangement which your Excellency's Government may be making for the future treaty with the Aborigines of this part of the North West, but that he may hear from your Excellency personally what the future intentions your Excellency's Government will be to the Indians generally of this Country regarding their lands; also a reiteration of your Excellency's former assurances, in order, on his return to his people, he may report to them your Excellency's own words, which may allay their anxiety and thus put a stop to the already existing disaffection toward the white man whom they hear is about to come to their country.[39]

The Canadian government was, however, not able to contain the chaos in the unceded Indian territories west of Manitoba. By 1873, starvation was becoming chronic along the North Saskatchewan River valley and the Cree became increasingly distraught at the prospect of being slowly annihilated while surveyors and prospectors continued to move into the unceded territory.[40] At Victoria, the survey of HBC land was disputed by the local inhabitants and along the Bow River, a geological survey party was prevented from

carrying out their surveys.[41] Charles Bell, a government surveyor who was stationed in the Northwest at that time, informed Alexander Morris, the newly-appointed Lt. Gov. of Manitoba, that:

> There will certainly be trouble with the Plains Cree if word is not sent early to inform them of treaties to be made with them in the coming summer. Forts Pitt, Victoria and Edmonton are very unprotected if any trouble should arise this spring.
> There is no doubt there will be some trouble about the Treaties and Reserves, let them be managed as they may, for the policy of the American outlaws will be to excite the Indians to make no treaties or go on Reserves, bad whiskey is already doing its work.[42]

The arrival of the North-West Mounted Police in 1874 purportedly to eliminate the illicit traders and mercenary groups, represented, for the North Saskatchewan Cree, a deeper penetration of alien authority into their traditional territory.[43] While the Canadian government did negotiate a treaty at Qu'Appelle in 1874, they did not pursue their treaty negotiations westward into the North Saskatchewan River region in 1875. Another Geological Survey party was blockaded in the North Saskatchewan River valley in the summer of 1875. In July of 1875, because of the administrative chaos throughout the Saskatchewan region, the Metis established a provisional government at St. Laurent

under the leadership of Gabriel Dumont. Concerns for orderly government in the northwest and a recognition of aboriginal land rights in the unceded territory were issues as pressing for the Metis as they were for the Cree.[44]. The extension of a telegraph line from Red River to Edmonton during the summer of 1875 would ultimately spark a verbal confrontation that would hasten the Canadian government to negotiate Treaty Six with the bands of the North Saskatchewan region the following year.[45]

Notes

1. Olive Patricia Dickason, 1980, "A Historical Reconstruction for the Northwestern Plains", in Prairie Forum, 1980, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 21

2. The Cree call themselves by the name *Nehiyawok*. Its origin is unknown. Joe Dion, 1979, My Tribe the Crees, Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary, p. 1. The North American continent is known as Turtle Island in Cree mythology. Peter O'Chiese, oral presentation, Native Students Awareness Days, University of Alberta, Edmonton, March, 1985.

3. Frederick Hodge, 1912, Handbook of Indians of Canada, King's Printer, Ottawa, pp. 14-15

4. Hodge, 1912, p. 19

5. David Mandlebaum, 1979, The Plains Cree, Canadian Plains Research Centre, Regina, pp. 20-31, and Bruce Cox, 1984, "Indian Middlemen and the Early Fur Trade: Reconsidering the Position of the Hudson's Bay Company's "Trading Indians"." in Thomas Buckley (ed.) Rendezvous: Selected Papers of the Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1984, North American Fur Trade Conference, St. Paul, pp. 93-100

6. Mandlebaum, 1979, pp. 16-17

7. Mandlebaum, 1979, p. 10

8. Mandlebaum, 1979, pp. 10-11. The Chiefs of these bands included Sweetgrass, Little Pine, and Big Bear (Sekamokeoyo). W.B. Fraser, 1966, "Big Bear, Indian Patriot" in Alberta Historical Review, 1966, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 3

9. Mandlebaum, 1979, p. 11

10. Mandlebaum, 1979, p. 52

11. Arthur Ray, 1974, Indians in the Fur Trade, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, pp. 156-157.

12. Mandlebaum, 1979, pp. 53-55. The term Poundmaker was given to the shaman responsible for the hunt (*Pe to ka han a pe we yin*). The buffalo pound was known as *pitokahan*. Dion, 1979, p. 22

13. Mandlebaum, 1979, p. 68

14. Mandlebaum, 1979, p. 69. The term *Manawanis Sakahegan* is the indicative name for lakes where eggs are collected. Two lakes in the Saddle Lake traditional territory bearing that name were regularly used by Little Hunter and Blue Quill and their bands.

15. J.G. MacGregor, 1949, Blankets and Beads: A History of the Saskatchewan River, The Institute of Applied Art, Edmonton, pp. 137-139. See also David Thompson, 1916, Narrative of his Exploration, Champlain Society, Toronto; and Wayne Moodie, 1987, "The trading post settlement of the Canadian Northwest, 1774-1821" in Journal of Historical Geography, 1987, Vol. 13, No. 4. pp. 360-374

16. Trudy Nicks, 1979, "Iroquois Fur Traders and Their Descendants in Alberta" in Metis Association of Alberta, Origins of Metis Land Claims, 1979, MAA, pp. 18-34. Victoria Calihoo, 1959, "The Iroquois in Aberta" Alberta Historical Review, 1959, No. 7, pp. 17-18

17. Ray, 1974, p. 118

18. Ray, 1974, p. 156

19. Arthur Ray, 1980, "Indians as Consumers in the Eighteenth Century", Carol Judd and Arthur Ray, (eds.), Old Trails and New Directions: Papers of the Third North American Fur Trade Conference, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, pp. 265-266

20. W. N. Sage, 1946, "The Oregon Treaty of 1846" Canadian Historical Review, 1946; Vol. XXVII, No. 4, p. 349-367

21. John Palliser, 1860, Further Papers Relative to the Exploration of North America, London, Letters no. 1 and no. 3

22. John W. Grant, 1984, Moon of Wintertime p. 143

23. George Munro Grant, 1872, Ocean to Ocean, Toronto

24. W.D. Clark, 1971, Victoria Settlement, Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA), Edmonton, p. 4

25. W.D. Clark, 1971, p. 4

26. Michael C. Scollen, OMI, Oblate Papers, PAA, Box 51

27. Scollen, Oblate Papers

28. Scollen, Oblate Papers

29. Scollen, Oblate Papers. Scollen mentions that a number of Metis families from Lac La Biche were travelling with the bands, namely, the Cardinal, Tourangeau and Batoche families. In 1869, a Protestant congregation was held where the assembled chiefs included Sayakamat, Pakan, Samson, and Erminskin as well as the missionaries Steinhauer and McDougall. Fraser (1966) mentions that Sweetgrass was one of the main chiefs recognized by the HBC. p. 73

30. Scollen, Oblate Papers

31. Simpson to Ross, London, 2 December, 1840. Donald Ross Papers. Provincial Archives of British Columbia

32. Joseph J. Hargrave, 1871, "Annual Routine in Red River Settlement", Red River, Montreal, pp. 155-173

33. Carol Judd, 1980, "Native Labour and Social Stratification in the Hudson Bay Company's Northern Department", Canadian Revue of Sociology and Anthropology, 1980, vol.17, no. 4, pp. 305-314. See also J. W. Chalmers, 1969, "Social Stratification of the Fur Trade", Alberta Historical Review, 1969, Vol. 17, No. 2

34. Palliser, 1860. W. F. Butler, 1873, The Great Lone Land, London. Richard Wright, 1985, Overlanders: 1858 Gold, Western Producer Prairie Books, Saskatoon. Sanford Fleming, 1874, Report of progress on the explorations and surveys up to January 1874, MacLean, Roger, Ottawa. Henry Houle Hind, Narrative of the Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition of 1857 and the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition of 1858, Edmonton, 1971. John Tobias, 1983, "Canada's Subjugation of the Plains Cree ", Canadian Historical Review, Vol. LXIV, No. 4, p. 523, note 15, mentions that Hind reported that a Cree council led by Mistickoos was actively pursuing a policy of limiting hunting privileges for Metis and European residents or travellers in the territory.

35. J.G. MacGregor, 1975, Father Lacombe, Hurtig, Edmonton, p. 192. See also Paul Sharp, 1955, Whoop-Up Country: the

Canadian American West, 1865-1885, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis

36. Archibald to Secretary of State for the Provinces, Ottawa. Canada Sessional Papers (CSP), 34 Victoria, 1871, No. 20, p. 15

37. Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, 1976, Treaty Six, Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, Saskatoon p. 15

38. Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, 1976, pp. 4-14

39. PAM, Archibald Papers, No. 671; Petition of the Indians of Whitefish Lake to Archibald, 7th May, 1872 in Isaac Kholisile Mabindisa, 1984, The Praying Man: The Life and Times of Henry Bird Steinhauer, unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, p. 499

40. Mabindisa, 1984, pp. 504-505

41. Mabindisa, 1984, pp. 504-505

42. PAC, MG 27, ID 10, David Laird Papers, Charles Bell to the Department of the Interior, 4th April, 1874 in Mabindisa, 1984, p. 505

43. Lorne and Caroline Brown, 1973, An Unauthorized History of the RCMP, James Lewis and Samuel, Toronto, p. 13 ; J.P. Turner, 1950, The North-West Mounted Police, 1873-1893, Vol. 1, King's Printer and Controller of Stationary, Ottawa, pp. 222-237

44. George Stanley, 1978, "The Half-Breed Rising of 1875", Sealey and Lussier, 1978, pp. 131-146

45. Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, 1976, p. 15

## III. Chapter 3

### Treaty Six and the Indian Act

When the Cree Nation negotiated their treaty with the Canadian government at Forts Carlton and Pitt in 1876, it is certain that the various plains and woodlands bands already had a broad understanding of the coercive force behind Canadian imperial expansion (Figure 3.1). The Crees' knowledge of prior negotiations and cessions of land is not thoroughly documented in the Treaty Six proceedings, but widespread travel by many bands throughout the west in both Canada and the United States would have brought them into contact with various nations such as the Ojibway and Saulteaux who would have shared information with them about treaty positions and conditions of agreement.

Because the expansionist ideology of the Canadian government had historically restricted the traditional rights of many aboriginal nations, the Cree maintained a defensive position in regard to the advance of the state. Negotiating a treaty required the solidarity of Indian and Metis nations to ensure a deflection of the government's expansionism and at the same time maintain as many of the rights as they could salvage. Chief Pakan also continued unceasingly to inform the government about their obligations to negotiate a treaty. In June of 1876, Pakan wrote to the Lt. Gov. of Manitoba, Alexander Morris:

> We see in different directions Surveying parties travelling over our hunting grounds, surveying lands

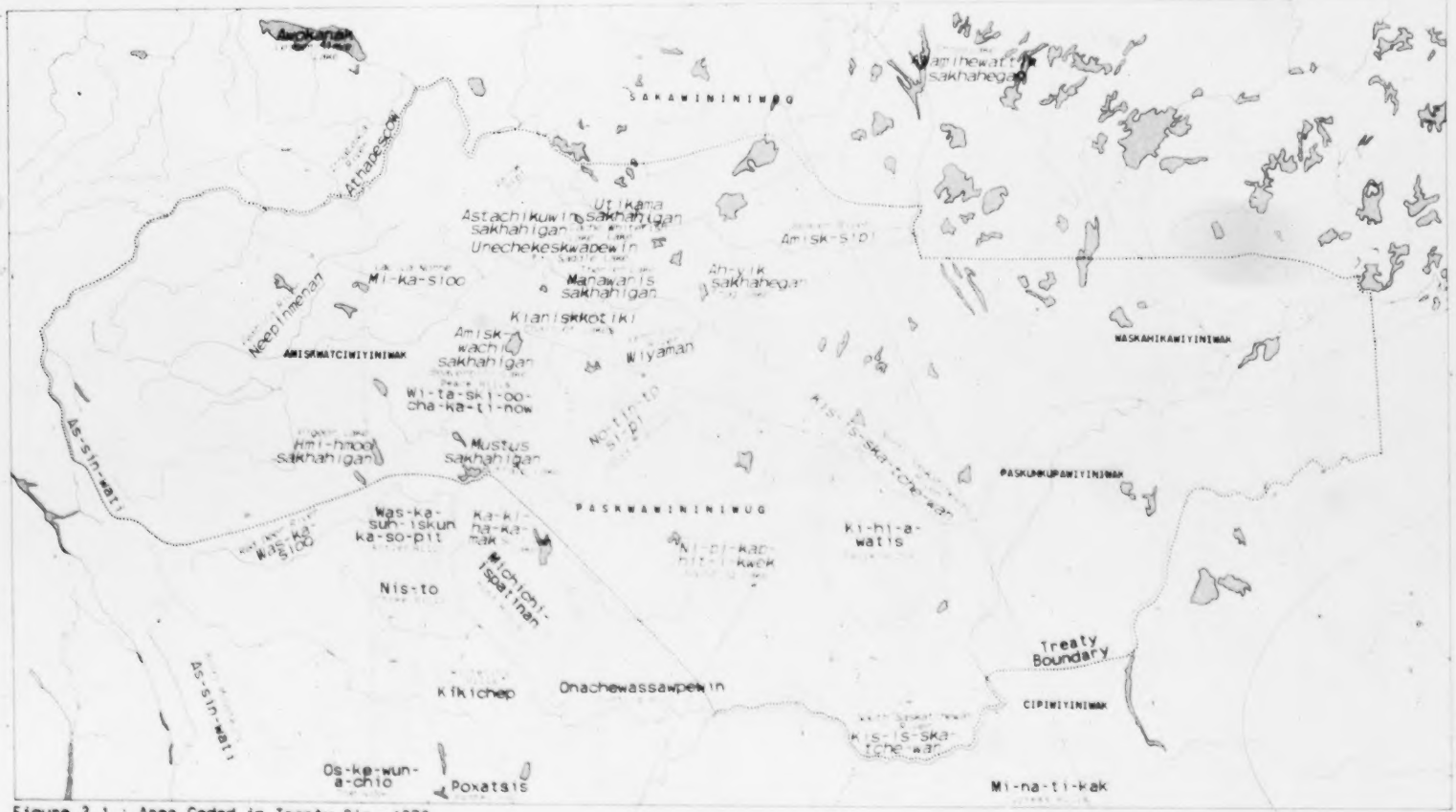


Figure 3.1 : Area Ceded in Treaty Six, 1876
Source : Hodge (1912), pp. 476-477

> which we call ours by right of descent; and another party is coming along through our Country setting up their posts and laying their telegraph wire, and White men taking claims of lands, and military posts are being established along the banks of our noble River Saskatchewan. We see this is at variance with that which Governor Archibald, your predecessor, assured us in the name of our Great Mother the Queen that the lands and hunting grounds of the Indians of the Saskatchewan were not to be meddled with until such time as the Government of our Great Mother the Queen treated with the Indians regarding their lands and hunting grounds.[1]

After several years of government delay, Treaty Six was negotiated at Ft. Carlton from August 18 to August 23 and at Ft. Pitt from September 7 to September 12. Chief Pakan, who was accompanied by his councillor, William Bull, as well as by Chief Little Hunter of Saddle Lake and Peter Erasmus, a Cree interpreter and resident of Whitefish Lake, took part in the negotiations at Ft. Pitt.

Chief Pakan emphasized throughout the negotiations for a reserve of land which he had:

> envisaged was not just for the Whitefish Lake and Goodfish Lake Indians; it was to be large enough to be a home for other bands of Cree who would not have the opportunity to be directly represented at the negotiations because they were hunting or did not

> want to choose reserves at that time. The Indian territory would be large enough to enable the Crees within it to determine their own affairs.[2]

According to Erasmus, Pakan told Lt. Gov. Morris at the treaty negotiations that:

> I want an area from the Whitemud River to Dog Rump Creek, extending as far as the Beaver River and its southern border to be the Saskatchewan River.[3]

Since this specific request by Chief Pakan could not be included in the treaty document, a request would be forwarded to Ottawa by Morris on behalf of Chief Pakan. With this verbal promise, Chief Pakan signed the treaty at Ft. Pitt on the 12th of September, 1876.

The land provisions in Treaty Six included the distribution of Indian reserve land equal to the equivalent of one square mile per family of five, but the government included a clause of land surrender such:

> that the aforesaid reserves of land or any interest therein may be sold or otherwise disposed of by Her Majesty's Government for the use and benefit of the said Indians entitled thereto, with their consent first had and obtained.[4]

The government also made "a present of twelve dollars for each man, woman, and child" and would also pay an annual annuity to each chief, councillor, and band member as compensation for the extinguishment of the land claim of the entire Treaty Six region.[5] Access to the ceded land was also

conditionally arranged by the government:

> the said Indians shall have right to pursue their avocations of hunting and fishing throughout the tract surrendered as hereinbefore described, subject to such regulations as may from time to time be made by her Government of her Dominion of Canada, and saving and excepting such tracts as may from time to time be required or taken up for settlement, mining, lumbering or other purposes.[6]

Fifteen hundred dollars per annum would be provided yearly by the government to purchase ammunition and twine, and in case of pestilence or famine, an Indian agent or agents would "grant to the Indians assistance of such character and to such extent that the Chief Superintendent of Indian Affairs shall deem necessary."[7]

Regarding agriculture, one thousand dollars per annum for three years would be provided for each band who settled on reserves as well as the provisioning "once for all" of the following implements and supplies:

> Four hoes for every family actually cultivating and two spades per family as aforesaid; one plough for every three families as aforesaid, one harrow for every three families as aforesaid; two scythes and one whetstone and two hayforks and two reaping-hooks for every family as aforesaid; and also one cross-cut saw, and also handsaw, one pit-saw, the necessary files, one grinstone and one auger for

> each band; and also for each Chief, for the use of his band, one chest of ordinary carpenter's tools; also for each band, enough of wheat, barley, potatoes and oats to plant the land actually broken up for cultivation by such band; also for each band, four oxen, one bull and six cows, also one boar and two sows, and one handmill when any band shall raise sufficient grain therefor.[8]

Schools would be maintained on each reserve and a medicine chest would be available at the house of each Indian agent.

Finally, the last clause of the treaty subjected the Indian people to the observance of Canadian law:

> They promise and engage that they will in all respects obey and abide by the law,...and that they will aid and assist the officers of Her Majesty in bringing to justice and punishment any Indian offending against the stipulations of this treaty, or infringing the laws in force in the country so ceded.[9]

The majority of the treaty clauses diminished the traditional land and economic rights of the Indian people.

To the Cree, the Canadian government's treaty policy which set the paramaters for the purchase and subsequent control of their aboriginal territory was manipulative and fundamentally racist in its refusal to recognize Cree national rights:

> Historically, it... seems clear that the government did not consider the Indians to be independent nations at the time the original treaties were made, and in the Commissioner's report on the post-Confederation treaties, both the Government representatives and the Indian negotiators indicate that they considered the Indian peoples to be subjects of the Queen.[10]

The Canadian purchase of ceded land through the treaty agreement effectively meant that the aboriginal people would be transformed, by the legal means of the treaty, from a nation with territory to wards whose land was held in trust for them by the Cnadian government.

In distinct opposition to this point of view, the Cree Nation negotiated Treaty Six with the implicit understanding that they were reaching an international treaty agreement for peace and co-operative co-existence with Canada. Despite the natural legality of Indian and Metis nations in North America, the colonial mentality continued to predominate in the Canadian government. The main weapon of social control was the legislation of statutes which were amended and consolidated within the legal parameters of the treaty originally formulated on 'conquerer's rights'.

The notion of conquering a nation and controlling its socio-economic destiny can be conceived when we consider the wording of the Indian land surrender clauses found in the American Ordinance of 1789 and in the Canadian government's

Treaty Six:

> The utmost good faith shall always be observed toward the Indians; their land and property shall never be taken from them without their consent; and in their property, rights and liberty, they shall never be invaded or disturbed unless in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress...[11]
>
> The Plain and Wood Cree Tribes of Indians and all other Indians inhabiting the district hereinafter described and defined do hereby cede, release, surrender and yield up to the Government of the Dominion of Canada for Her Majesty the Queen and her Successors forever, all their rights, titles and privileges whatsoever, to the lands included within the following limits...[12]

Similarly, the Enfranchisement Act (1869), the Indian Act (consolidated in 1876), the Dominion Lands Act(1872), the North West Mounted Police Act(1873), and the North West Territories Act(1875) reflected, by their content, the diminishment of aboriginal rights within the Treaty Six region.[13]

The coincidental amendment and consolidation of the Indian Act in 1876 ensured, for the government, the mechanism by which the treaties could be implemented in the newly ceded Indian territory. The Indian Act encompassed all previous Canadian legislation regarding Indian people. Eighteen specific sections (Sec. 4 to 22) dealt with the

controlling of reserve land; two sections (Sec. 23 to 24) involved the repair of roads; four sections (Sec. 25 to 28) related to land surrender and sixteen sections (Sec. 29 to 44) dealt with its management and sale. Thirteen sections (Sec. 45 to 57) involved the management and sale of timber. Three sections (Sec. 58 to 60) involved moneys and three more sections (Sec. 61 to 63) related to Councils and Chiefs. Twenty-two sections (Sec. 64 to 85) dealt with privileges, disabilities and penalties, evidence of non-Christian Indians, and intoxicants. Finally, enfranchisement was included in nine sections (Sec. 86 to 94) with six closing sections (Sec. 95 to 100) dealing with miscellaneous provisions.[14]

While the intent of the debates on the Indian Act in the House of Commons in 1876 was meant to clarify the Indian-European relationship, the debates led to the usurpation of aboriginal rights and to conflicts of interest amongst the members of the house:

> Mr. Bowell [Conservative MP for Hastings North, 1867-1896] observed that the Mohawk Indians had leased their lands to whites for a great many years, but never he believed without the consent of the Department. He doubted very much that it would be to their benefit if they could lease their properties to whom they might think proper.[15]
>
> "Mr. Fleming [Liberal MP for Brant North, 1872-1882] said it was well known that the Six Nation Indians

> obtained a large tract of land from the Government for services rendered during the war. Efforts were made at various times to induce them to surrender a portion of that large tract, which they refused to do until representations were made to them that it would be to their advantage to do so. It would be recollected that a number of individuals who made purchases of this land neglected to pay for it. It was merely from the accident, that the money was not forthcoming at the proper time, that this money was now brought into the question at all. If the lands purchased had been paid for promptly there would have been no accrued interest.[16]

The presence of surrender clauses in the Treaty Six document foreshadowed the future struggles that the North Saskatchewan River Indians would have against the Canadian government over reserve lands.

Similarly, the adhesions to Treaty Six by Kiskayim, Alexis, Passpasschase, Kehiwins, Pus-kee-yah-kay-we-yin and Makayo in 1877 and 1878 represented the yearly extension of the Canadian military to control the newly-occupied territory and this form of containment continued in the Treaty Six territory until the need to negotiate Treaty 8 in 1899.[17]

Under the chieftanships of James Seenum (Pakan) and Little Hunter, Saddle Lake became the western centre of nomadic band decisions for the First Nations of the North

Saskatchewan region. The subsequent tribal evolution following the treaty accommodated the integration of other bands from the parklands as the settlement pressures continued to prevent free territorial movement. Thus, the cultural development of Whitefish Lake and Saddle Lake is historically related to a certain extent, with the initial responsibilities that Pakan and Little Hunter had as vanguard negotiators of the First Nations of the central North Saskatchewan Cree who participated at the Fort Pitt negotiations in 1876.

Notes

1. PAC, RG 10 B1, Alexander Morris Papers; Chief James Seenum to Alexander Morris, 18th April, 1876 in Isaac Kholisile Mabindisa, 1984, The Praying Man: The Life and Times of Henry Bird Steinhauer, unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, pp. 509-510

2. Mabindisa, 1984, p. 516

3. Peter Erasmus, 1976, Buffalo Days and Nights, Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary, p. 260

4. Alexander Morris, 1880, The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories. Belfords, Clarke & Co. Toronto. p. 353

5. Morris, 1880, p. 353

6. Morris, 1880, p. 353

7. Morris, 1880, p. 354

8. Morris, 1880, p. 354

9. Morris, 1880, p. 355

10. Peter A. Cumming and Neil Mickenburg (eds.), 1972, Native Rights in Canada. IEAC. Toronto. p. 54

11. 1 Stat. 50, 1789

12. Treaty Six, 1876

13. Statutes of Canada (SC), 1869, 32 Victoria, cap. VI. SC, 1872, 35 Victoria, cap. 23; SC, 1873, 36 Victoria, cap. 35; SC, 1875, 38 Victoria, cap. 49; SC, 1876, 39 Victoria, cap. 18

14. An Act to amend and consolidate the laws respecting

Indians, Chapter 18, 39 Victoria, pp. 43-73

15. House of Commons, Debates, March 30, 1876, p. 927

16. House of Commons, Debates, March 30, 1876, pp. 930-931

17. Morris, 1880, Appendices, pp. 360-363

## IV. Chapter 4

### 1877-1885

For the Saddle Lake people and the aboriginal people of the Treaty Six region, the post-treaty years from 1876 to the rebellion in 1885, were years of unfulfilled promises from the Canadian government and years of forced relocation and enclosure, intimidation and starvation.

While the Euro-Canadian settler-farmer and industrialist advanced by horse and wagon, steamboat and soon afterwards by railroad in 1883, the Indian people were unceasingly co-erced, by DIA and the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP), into reservation settlement with no equal opportunity to advance socio-economically within the industrial complex of the Canadian frontier that began to develop rapidly after the Treaty agreements of 1871 to 1877.

Despite the government's focus on agriculture as the new mainstay of the Cree livelihood, treaty promises did not include the provisioning of the most modern agricultural machinery that was available nor did it include access to free markets. Instead, the people were provided with oxen and ploughs, hoes and rakes, and not much more.

The traditional hunt thus remained paramount for survival in the post-treaty years, but the plains region, in particular, became almost devoid of game only a few years after the treaty. Verbal promises made at the treaty to protect the buffalo from disappearing were enacted by the North-West Territories Council in 1877, but repealed soon

after, and by 1879, the buffalo was all but eliminated from the Canadian plains.[1]

White settlement expansion along the North Saskatchewan River valley was particularly oriented, between 1877 and 1885, towards Battleford, Prince Albert and Edmonton, missing the Saddle Lake region. This expansion pattern, however, cannot be seen as a reason for Chief Pakan's policy of non-interference subsequent to the treaty.[2]

Because of their early participation in the treaty, the political position of the Saddle Lake bands within the Treaty Six agreements may have reflected a relative degree of willingness, especially on the part of Chief Pakan of the Whitefish Lake band, to accommodate, within reason, the participation of Canadian interests in the west. This led to the Chief and his band being well regarded by North-West Territories Lieutenant-Governor David Laird and by the Minister of the Interior, David Mills:

> The Indians at Whitefish Lake have especially distinguished themselves by their successful efforts in farming; these Indians have been engaged for many years past in tilling the soil, and are stated, by the Superintendant to be the most civilized band of Indians in the Territories.[3]

The recognition that the government gave to Chief Pakan and his band may not have reflected a serious recognition of agricultural self-sufficiency by the Lieutenant-Governor and the Indian Superintendant and the Minister of Interior, but

rather, may have betrayed an unconscious deduction that Pakan was not interfering with the Canadian imperialist advance as much as other bands including those of Big Bear and Little Pine. Big Bear and Little Pine had refused to sign the treaty in 1876 and returned south to claim the Cypress Hills as their territory.

Many other Chiefs along with Pakan and Little Hunter had placed faith in the treaty to ensure a decent livelihood for their people. The Chiefs' expectations for substantial reserve land and assistance to develop agriculturally while retaining unrestricted access to water, wood, hunting, fishing and trapping were the consequences of promises which had been made by the Canadian government during treaty negotiations. The Chiefs viewed these promises as a sacred trust.

The government however was slow to fulfill its treaty obligations. Its help within the first year (1877) of post-treaty band development was limited to an annuity payment to each band member as well as to the issuing of food and seed supplies.[4] Distribution of agricultural implements did not start until 1878.[5] The meagre provisioning of food and poor agricultural initiatives by the government, compounded by a lack of game, compelled the Chiefs to confront the Indian Superintendant, David Laird, at Battleford throughout the winter of 1877 and spring of 1878:

> About forty delegations on one pretence or another visited this office during the winter, and as they all arrived completely out of provisions, they had to be supplied and induced to leave as soon and as quietly as possible. Over fifteen chiefs, some of them coming from as far west as Lac La Biche, Whitefish Lake and Victoria, paid their respects to the Superintendent since his arrival here... Though these visits have entailed a little expense on the government, yet I trust the results will be beneficial, as it afforded an opportunity to explain the provisions of the Treaty, and possibly thereby to remove some causes of dissatisfaction.[6]

Approximately one month previous to having written this statement Laird had conceded:

> I fear (the band at Whitefish Lake) will have no produce to dispose of next spring. The same, I fear, may be said of every other Band in the Territories.[7]

Despite numerous reports of starvation throughout the Northwest in the years 1878, 1879 and 1880, government officials including the Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald, insisted that food provisions from the government would not only be temporary but that they would have to be 'earned' through work:

> It was impressed upon them that such relief was only for the time being, and would not be continued, after they might become either through the

> reappearance of the natural food supply or by their individual efforts in farming or otherwise able to procure their own subsistence; and whenever and wherever the labour of the applicants could be turned into account, a system of exacting work from them in return for food distributed to themselves and their families was invariably followed.[8]

To prevent the gathering of bands around Battleford and band movements in the territories, provisions were to be strategically delivered by the Indian Branch at the time of annuity payments to Victoria and Edmonton, amongst other localities.[9] This policy was used as a less direct alternative than continual coerced enclosure by the NWMP.[10] The minimisation of nomadic band movements allowed government survey crews to survey trails, meridians, baselines and Indian reserves throughout the North Saskatchewan River valley where bands were willing to have surveys carried out.[11]

During the summer of 1879, a reserve was surveyed at Frog Lake and it is likely that when Chiefs Pakan and Little Hunter found out how little land was being allotted at Frog Lake, they refused permission to have a reserve surveyed either at Whitefish or Saddle Lake.[12]

That same summer, the Saddle Lake bands also confronted the Indian Commissioner, Edgar Dewdney, with complaints about the substandard provisioning of implements and cattle:

> They all had grievances about bad ploughs and spades

> and wild cattle. I explained to them that if it was found on examination that they had not received what was promised them by the treaties, they should be replaced, that agents and instructors were about to be sent to reside among them...[13]

Because starvation was still a real and ongoing threat to the survival of the Saddle Lake people, the importance of having the treaty promises fulfilled was of paramount concern for the bands. With no end to the suffering in sight, the inspector of farms, Wadsworth, continued to be patronizing in his reports:

> The Indians of this district (Saddle Lake) are very anxious to become self-supporting, but as yet cannot see their way to make a living from farming...I have promised them additional help next spring... to the extent of sending one man to each reserve with an additional yoke of oxen... the man will not only work himself and show the Indians how to put in the seed, but will exercise such a control of the provisions and seed sent them that nothing will be wasted.[14]

Lt. Gov. David Laird had begun in 1878 to make recommendations to Ottawa about funding organized agricultural development amongst the bands, but even within this context, his land policy orientation was colonial:

> I am of opinion that instead of large Reserves each Indian head of a family should receive

non-transferable script, or the right to locate on a certain quantity of land in any tract open for settlement. They would thus be able to settle down in two's and three's by the side of fishing lakes, or amidst some settlement of whites where they could get work and also enjoy the fruits of their industry on their own holdings.[15]

With the establishment of instructor-based supply farms two years later, in 1880, Dewdney also began to elaborate more precisely on the process that should be used by the government in their agricultural policy:

In considering in what way the farmers would be of most use in carrying out the wishes of the government, I thought it desirable that they should be located off the Indian reservations where a suitable place could be found, and where a group of reservations had been settled on within a small radius a central position should be selected so that they could have the supervision of more than one reserve.

My reason for coming to this conclusion was, that for the first season or so the bulk of the work done would be with our own labour, and if on the reservation, the Indians on whose land the improvements were made would consider that they were entitled to them, as well as to any crop raised. Another reason was that if our instructor resided on

the reservation, each band would consider that they were entitled to the same privilege.[16]

Nonetheless, the bands at Whitefish Lake and Saddle Lake brought forth demands, during the annuity payment of 1880, for better provisioning under more reasonable terms of disbursement. NWMP Inspector Gagnon, the government representative who was sent to deliver the annuity payments, simply told the bands, according to farm inspector T. P. Wadsworth, that someone with "high...authority" would come to listen at a later date.[17]

By 1881, the government was developing a more systematic approach to the development of band agriculture. However, their plan to establish supply farms to provide centrally located instructors to the bands remained within the context of a controlled-area policy. The purpose of the supply farms was self-sufficiency in food and seed stock, but each band was not to receive an instructor as the bands had expected originally. Instead, a number of bands were to be involved in the working of a central supply farm as had been recommended by Dewdney. One farm (no. 16) was located at Saddle Lake for the region. The Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) hired a farmer to act as instructor and to organise such activities as ploughing, seeding, maintenance and harvesting of crops.

The bands that were to benefit from the functioning of Farm No. 16 included Pakan's band from Whitefish Lake and Little Hunter's band from Saddle Lake as well as Blue

Quill's band from Egg Lake, Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic's band from Was-kat-ee-now, Peyasee's band from Lac La Biche, the Beaver Lake band and the Chipweyan band from Heart Lake (Figure 4.1).[18] The difficulty of encompassing several bands within a 50-mile radius in the operation effectively undermined the farm's success, given the conditions of travel and transport for the bands at that time.[19] Since the government's long-range intention was to relocate the outlying bands to Saddle Lake, DIA was not willing to invest the necessary capital to establish individual bands farms that could become self-sufficient.[20]

Individual band farms were nonetheless initiated by band members but they were not given the top capital priority by DIA that was accorded the agency supply farm. Consequently, the band farms were often short of seeds and adequate implements.

DIA's refusal to provide proper agricultural supplies manifested itself again in 1881 in several locations including Kehewin, Lac La Biche, Whitefish Lake and Saddle Lake:

> "On Keeheewin's reserve...according to the instructor's statement, the Chief received 100 bushels of potatoes for seeding purposes. The latter states he merely received 60.[21]

> The Indians [at Lac La Biche] had no grain and potatoes that they could rely upon for seed this

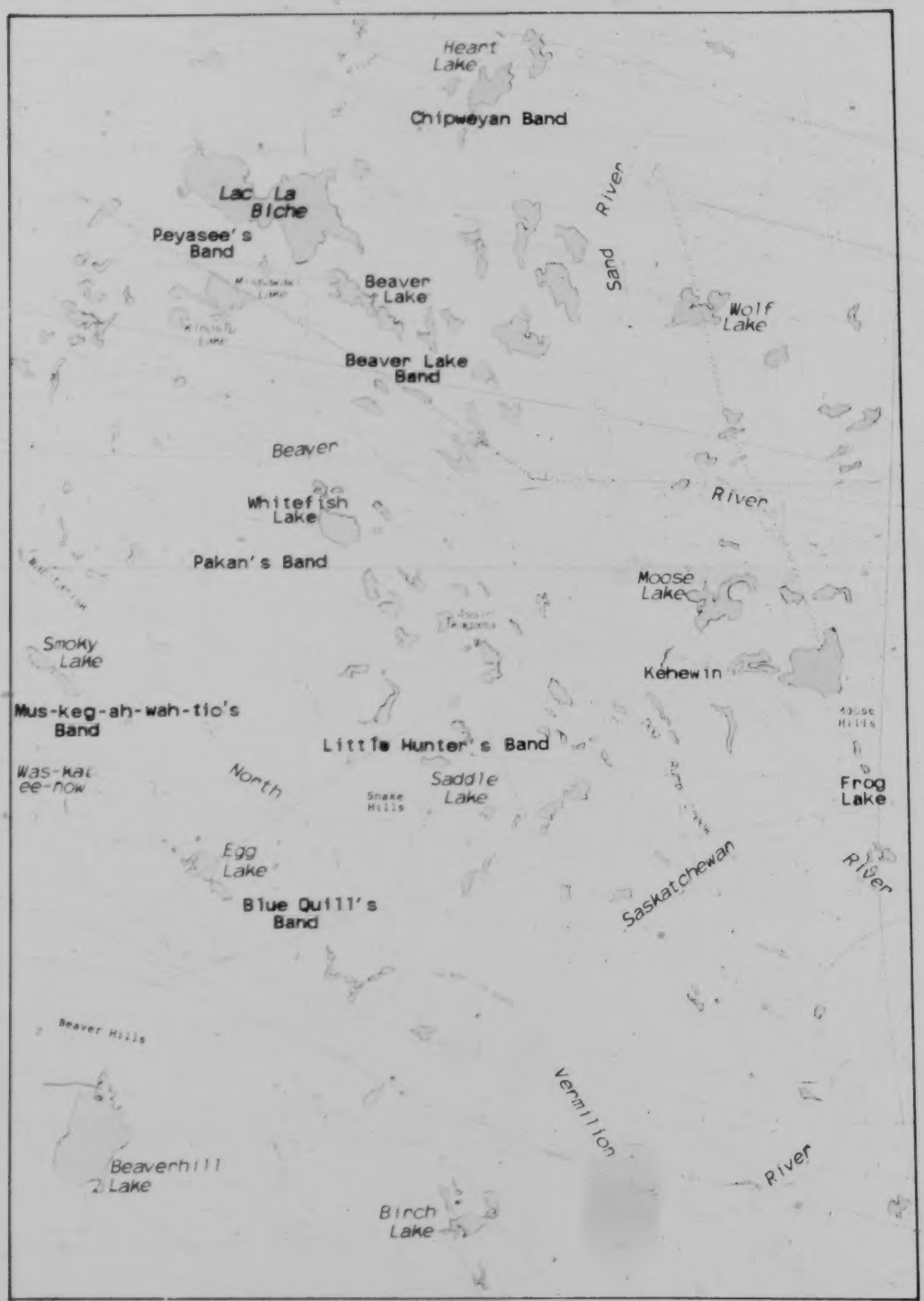


Figure 4.1 : Bands of Saddle Lake Agency, 1881
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1880, 46 Victoria, No. 5, p. 99

year, and, owing to the want of time and ammunition, had the prospect of a bad winter, which was fully realized. The traders having misconstrued the obligations of the treaty considered that the government was bound to supply these necessaries to an Indian's livelihood and had imported but little of either. This impression was removed, but of course it was then too late to supply the Indian's wants.[22]

At Whitefish Lake... Chief Secum or Pucan...said that although the fish were so scarce, if his supply of nets had not been so small, they could have caught sufficient fish for their support and felt that had each family early in the fall one net apiece (about 100 in all), they would have been able to support themselves without any other help. Chief Secum says if pigs had been given to them as per treaty, he would now have hundreds of them, and asks interest on account of non-payment.[23]

I found much distress in Little Hunter's Band. They have no game and catch but little fish. The worms of this lake [Saddle Lake] totally destroy the nets, sometimes consuming an entire one in one night... the only protection from the pests is to have the nets tanned, and would suggest the advisability of

> next season's supply being made up in Canada and tanned.[24]

In an attempt to mitigate the crisis of food shortages, DIA organized 'soup kitchens' in a number of localities including Victoria, Saddle Lake, and Whitefish Lake.

DIA also began to put more pressure on the bands of Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic at Was-kat-ee-now and Blue Quill at Egg Lake to relocate to Saddle Lake.[25] Despite evidence that substantial housing construction and field work had taken place on both settlements, DIA was justifying the relocation on the pretext that the bands did not have ready access to a farm instructor and were thus not capable of becoming successful in agriculture:

> Although they [Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic's band] have good land they have made but little progress in farming. Being so far (55 miles) from the Farming Instructor, he could give them no direct supervision, and this goes to prove that without direction the Indian will make but small progress.
>
> Blue Quill... have made but little progress in farming for the same reason that has proved such a drawback to the Wah-chat-ee-now Indians.[26]

Both Blue Quill and Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic, however, maintained that the bands' share of agricultural provisions was being sent to Saddle lake, evidently as a form of inducement by the department to have the bands relocate to Saddle Lake.[27] Therefore, neither Chief entertained the relocation

proposals of DIA in 1881.

During 1882, the Saddle Lake band sold a quantity of wood to the steamboats travelling along the North Saskatchewan River, but this appears to be the only evidence, up to this time, after the treaty, that some form of economic exchange took place between Saddle Lake and the Euro-Canadian population. Federal legislation amending the Indian Act in 1881 to prohibit produce marketing between the bands and 'non-Indians' would have severely limited the possibility of initiating economic transactions by either party. There is no mention, however, in the Annual Reports of the Department, of this law's implementation and/or enforcement.[28]

While the crops were good in 1882, Wadsworth stated in his agency report that the Saddle Lake supply farm might be discontinued in compliance with the federal decision to terminate the supply farm system.[29]

The reports of Wadsworth for 1883 are relatively scant. He mentions again the intent to close the farm at Saddle Lake and the storehouse at Victoria, and to force Blue Quill to relocate to Saddle Lake.[30] Although he did not report having pressured Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic to relocate, he does mention that the band had requested for more implements and oxen.[31]

In 1884, Wadsworth did not appear to pressure Blue Quill and Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic to relocate.
Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic's band failed to reap a crop but Blue

Quill and his band had harvested eighty bushels of barley.[32] Both bands were described by Wadsworth as good hunters and this occupation was expected to provide for the year given that the crops had failed in general. Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake also had difficulties with their crops but no mention is made of assistance beyond flour and bacon rations.[33] Table 4.1 indicates the agricultural statistics of the Saddle Lake bands during this time. Although the other bands of this district (Heart Lake, Lac La Biche and Beaver Lake) were reported to have sold furs worth $56,000 in 1884, the Saddle Lake bands were not mentioned as harvesters or marketers in this fur trade, by Wadsworth.[34] It is highly probable, however, that some band members were active in this fur trade. The apparent tranquility in which the annuity payments took place at Saddle Lake in 1884 belies the actual tension that was existing amongst the Indians and Metis throughout the treaty regions at that time. Government expenditures had been significantly reduced in 1883 (Table 4.2).[35] Along with this, rations were cut back while government officials insisted that a rule of 'no work, no food' was still in force.

Two incidents, one at Ft. Pitt and another at Crooked Lake in Assiniboia in early 1884, were definite signs that the Indian people could no longer tolerate the oppressive manner in which the treaty obligations were being handled by the government:

Reaction in the North-West to the reduced ration

| | | Year | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1880 | 1881 | 1882 | 1883 | 1884 | 1885 |
| Acres Broken | P | | 300 | | 215.5 | | 134 |
| | LH | | 150 | | 93.5 | | 137 |
| | BQ | | 12 | | | | 30 |
| | M | | 12 | | 11.5 | | 17 |
| | A | | 100 | 49.5 | 100.5 | | |
| Acres Under Crop | P | 55 | 300 | 215.5 | | 115 | |
| | LH | 46 | 150 | 93.5 | | 102 | |
| | BQ | 46 | 12 | 13.5 | | 30 | |
| | M | 46 | 12 | 11.5 | | 17 | |
| | A | 31 | 65 | 100 | 100.5 | | |
| Acres Fenced | P | | | | | | |
| | LH | | | 150 | 93.5 | | |
| | BQ | | | 15 | | | |
| | M | | | 30 | 11.5 | | |
| | A | | 100 | 155 | 35 | | |
| Acres Wheat | P | | | | | | |
| | LH | | | 13.5 | | | |
| | BQ | | | 2.5 | | | |
| | M | | | | | | |
| | A | | 20 | 10.5 | 28 | | |
| Acres Barley | P | | | | | | |
| | LH | | | 64.5 | | | |
| | BQ | | | 7.5 | | | |
| | M | | | 8 | | | |
| | A | | 33 | 70 | 90 | | |
| Acres Potatoes | P | | | | | | |
| | LH | | | 10 | | | |
| | BQ | | | 2.5 | | | |
| | M | | | 2 | | | |
| | A | | 5 | 6 | 48 | | |
| Bushels Potatoes | P | | | | | | |
| | LH | | 600 | 1000 | | | |
| | BQ | | 200 | 200 | | | |
| | M | | 200 | 200 | | | |
| | A | | | 600 | | | |
| Bushels Wheat | P | | | | | | |
| | LH | | | 19.5 | | | |
| | BQ | | | 30 | | | |
| | M | | | 75 | | | |
| | A | | 150 | | | | |
| Bushels Barley | P | | | | | | |
| | LH | | 500 | 1000 | | | |
| | BQ | | 200 | 100 | | | |
| | M | | 60 | | | | |
| | A | | | 1100 | | | |
| Oxen | P | | | 17 | | | 1 |
| | LH | | | 4 | 4 | 10 | 4 |
| | BQ | | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| | M | | | 2 | 2 | 6 | 7 |
| | A | | 6 | | 8 | | |
| Horses | P | | | | 85 | | 18 |
| | LH | | | | 25 | | 14 |
| | BQ | | | | 7 | | 9 |
| | M | | | | 9 | | 4 |
| | A | | 1 | 2 | 3 | | 2 |

Table 4. : Agricultural Statistics for the Saddle Lake Bands, 1880-1885
Source: Canada Sessional Papers, 1881-1886

P: Pakan LH: Little Hunter
BQ: Blue Quill M:Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic
A: Agency Supply Farm

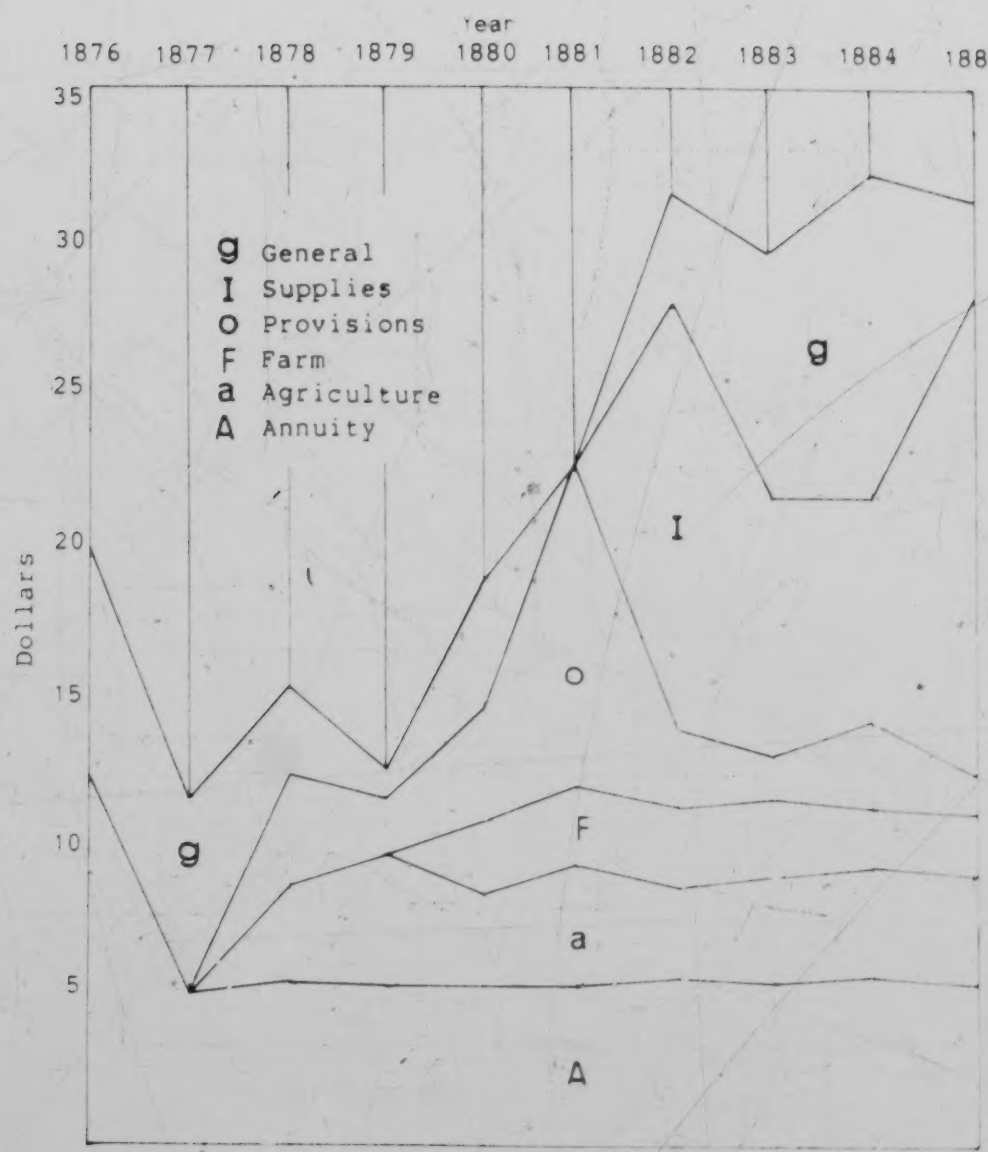


Figure 4.2: Per Capita Treaty Expenditures for the North-West Territories, Department of Indian Affairs, 1876-1885, Treaty Six.
Source: Canada Sessional Papers, 1877-1886

> issues came swiftly. The farming instructor at Ft. Pitt was threatened at knife-point when he refused to grant rations to an Indian who had just returned from an unsuccessful hunting expedition. Indians in the Crooked lakes district seized a government storehouse and distributed the rations it contained. Their leader, Yellow Calf, explained to a police officer that, "when they stole the provisions, their women and children were starving... and that they were well armed and might just as well die as be starved by the government." A police patrol sent to the reserve encountered a gathering of Indians determined to protect those who had taken food that they considered to be properly their own.[36]

Because of this growing disenchantment with government indifference, inter-band councils were organised by Big Bear, Poundmaker, and Piapot during the summer of 1884. Big Bear and Little Pine had surrendered their claim to the Cypress Hills in the summer of 1883 and signed an adhesion to Treaty Six before being relocated on reserves near Battleford and Ft. Pitt.[37]

The council gatherings of 1884 were intimidated by the NWMP who were now propelled into the conflict to enforce recent legislation aimed at controlling mass aboriginal organisation efforts.[38] Big Bear also organised that summer, a council with Louis Riel and the Metis.[39] At this council, as with others previous to this one, it was agreed upon,

albeit with some difference of political direction between Indian and Metis leaders, that the treaties had been abrogated and that new negotiations should take place. Another council gathering during the summer of 1885 was also confirmed at this meeting.

> However, according to Noel Dyck (1985), the government was not... prepared to renegotiate the terms of the treaties nor to allow the creation of the large Indian territory sought by Big Bear and his allies. In an attempt to head off a further series of Indian councils planned for the summer of 1885, Dewdney sought to placate the Cree with increased rations and by finally supplying all of the goods stipulated in the treaties. If these measures failed, then he would order the arrest of key Cree leaders under charges of incitement to insurrection even though neither he nor the police anticipated violence from the Cree political movement.[40]

The annuity payments for 1884 did not take place until October and perhaps because the Assistant Commissioner, Hayter Reed, who accompanied the annuity expedition, promised an immediate cattle distribution, the bands apparently expressed no major grievances.[41] An agreement was reached between Chief Pakan and the Assistant Commissioner to carry out a reserve survey. Because of Pakan's long-standing stalemate with the department over the size of the reserve, the bands from Bears' Hills had also held out a

number of years until 1885 before allowing a survey to take place.[42]

While these deliberations were going on during the winter of 1884-85, a number of deaths due to starvation and sickness were reported at Bear's Hills.[43] This compounded the growing anxiety, and in February, meetings were held between the dissident faction of the Bear's Hills bands and "a number of Indians from the bands of Big Bear and Little Pine" who were wintering at Buffalo Lake near Bear's Hills.[44]

Although no meetings of this nature apparently took place at or with the Saddle Lake bands in the winter of 1884-85, other meetings were also taking place in Batoche amongst the Metis.[45] The outbreak of the rebellion shortly afterwards would seem to indicate that Big Bear's and Louis Riel's strategy of negotiation had failed to contain the intra-aboriginal dissent.

Given the intimidating circumstances under which these councils took place, it would seem relatively simple to deduce that starvation and continued Euro-Canadian encroachment finally raised the ire of some of the Indian and Metis to the point of retaliatory action. However, the localized and factional nature of the retaliatory movement indicated that most Chiefs (including Pakan and Samson of Bear's Hills) were either not interested in participating in a rebellion or were not convinced that a rebellion could be successful.[46] Nonetheless, all of the bands along the North

Saskatchewan River, and throughout most of the treaty regions, were directly or indirectly affected by the rebellion.

The following excerpts of a report from Indian agent, W. Anderson, give his version of what generally occurred in the Saddle Lake and Victoria area during the rebellion:

> On account of their close proximity to the disturbed district, nothing was done towards putting in a crop, runners from the rebels constantly arriving and trying to induce them to join.
>
> James Seenum (Pakan),... was loyal all the time, although every inducement was held out to him to take part with the rebels. At last a party came up from Pitt and endeavored to seize some goods belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company at Whitefish Lake. This the Chief would not allow,...took to the woods with his band, and there he remained until the trouble was over.
>
> The Saddle Lake band... also abandoned their reserve, the loyal ones joining Seenum, the others taking part with the rebels... a portion of this band raided the farm sixteen stores...
>
> Blue Quill, of Egg Lake, was loyal, but most of his band joined in the raiding.[47]

Taking into consideration the extent of the oppression which the Indian and Metis people had suffered during the early post-treaty years, the outbreak of the rebellion of 1885 is

not surprising.

Recent evidence from one author, Donald McLean, suggests that the Canadian government under Prime Minister Macdonald allowed protracted covert infiltration, espionage and provocation organised by local provocateurs to take place in Prince Albert, Batoche and elsewhere in the NWT.[48] McLean presents evidence that this covert action was allowed to occur because the government urgently needed financial support to complete the Canadian Pacific railway which was incurring problems of credit facility at that time. This evidence refutes the contention by such authors as Thomas Flanagan that the government was doing its utmost to redress Indian and Metis grievances.[49] However, this would still seem to have been only one of the excuses for the government to ignore local covert provocation.

The myriad of government policies, based on the usurpation of aboriginal rights, including the prohibition of market participation, forced enclosure and the inadequacy of their agricultural policy, indicate that the Canadian government was intentionally abrogating the treaty because they had little respect for its validity within the tenets of international law.

Thus, despite the treaty agreement, the Saddle Lake bands, like the other bands and tribes of the Treaty Six region, were severely oppressed, in their efforts to maintain their rights, by the imposition of a Canadian government policy which emphasized a military-economic

control of the Indian and Metis people.

Notes

1. Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College, 1976, Treaty Six, SICC, p. 28

2. The nature of inter-tribal relations between the Woods Cree and the Plains Cree at that time could have limited the consensus on treaty negotiations. The post-1876 adhesions to the treaty by bands not very far removed geographically from Saddle Lake would also indicate that communications were difficult to organize in time before the 1876 treaty was made.

3. David Mills, 1878, Canada Sessional Papers (CSP), Annual Report of the Department of the Interior, 41 Victoria, No. 10, p. xiv

4. David Laird, 1878, CSP, 41 Victoria, No. 10, p. 46

5. Laird, 1879, CSP, 42 Victoria, No. 7, p. 57

6. Laird, 1879, CSP, 42 Victoria, No. 7, p. 57

7. Laird, 1879, CSP, 42 Victoria, No. 7, p. 64

8. John A. Mcdonald, 1880, CSP, 43 Victoria, No. 4, p. xii

9. M. G. Dickieson, 1880, CSP, 43 Victoria, No. 4, p. 105. The Indian Branch remained within the Department of the Interior until 1880 when it became a separate department, although still under the mandate of the Minister of the Interior who acted as Superintendant-General of Indian Affairs (Statutes of Canada, 43 Victoria, Chapter 28, Sec. 3 & 7).

10. John Jennings, 1986, "The North West Mounted Police and

Indian Policy" in Laurie Barron and James Waldram (eds.), 1885 and After, Canadian Plains Research Centre, University of Regina, pp. 228-230; 1974, "The Plains Indians and the Law" in Hugh Dempsey (ed.), Men in Scarlet, Historical Society of Alberta, McClelland and Stewart West, p. 63

11. See survey reports by W. F. King (pp. 23-26) and Montague Aldous (pp. 39-41), 1880, CSP, 43 Victoria, No. 4, Appendices 5 & 6

12. George Simpson, 1880, CSP, 43 Victoria, No. 4, pp. 50-51

13. Edgar Dewdney, 1880, CSP, 43 Victoria, No. 4, p. 83

14. T. P. Wadsworth, 1883, CSP, 46 Victoria, No. 5, p. 88

15. Laird, 1879, CSP, 42 Victoria, No. 7, p. 65

16. Dewdney, 1880, CSP, 43 Victoria, No. 4, pp. 100-101

17. Wadsworth, 1883, CSP, 46 Victoria, No. 5, p. 183

18. Dewdney, 1880, CSP, 43 Victoria, No. 4, p. 99

19. Wadsworth, 1883, CSP, 46 Victoria, No. 5, p. 183

20. Wadsworth began to pressure Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic to relocate in the fall of 1880. The Indian Department also began to compile lists of the 'whereabouts' of band members at this time. Both of these developments indicate that the government began to intensify a policy of forced enclosure.

21. W. Anderson, 1882, CSP, 45 Victoria, No. 6, p. 84

22. Hayter Reed, 1882, CSP, 45 Victoria, No. 6, p. xvi

23. Anderson, 1882, CSP, 45 Victoria, No. 6, pp. xviii-xix

24. Anderson, 1882, CSP, 45 Victoria, No. 6, p. xix

25. Wadsworth, 1883, CSP, 46 Victoria, No. 5, pp. 182-183. "If the stores were all kept at [Saddle Lake], Blue Quill

and Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic and their followers might be induced to go there."

26. Wadsworth, 1883, CSP, 46 Victoria, No. 5, p. 182

27. Wadsworth, 1884, CSP, 47 Victoria, No. 4, p. 125

28. Statutes of Canada, 1881, 44 Victoria, cap. 17. John Leslie and Ron Maguire (eds.), 1987, The Historical Development of the Indian Act, DIAND, Ottawa, p. 81. This legislation was apparently enacted to prevent the purchase or barter for alcohol within the numbered treaty regions.

29. Wadsworth, 1883, CSP, 46 Victoria, No. 5, p. 183; John A. Macdonald, 1883, CSP, 46 Victoria, No. 5, pp. xi-xii: "I am glad to be able to report that the advanced condition of the Indians, settled upon reserves in several localities in the Territories, admitted of the closing during the past season of the Instructor's farms in those localities... The object for which they were established namely: the practical exemplification to the Indians of the manner in which farms should be managed, has been attained. The reduction of expenditure occasioned by the closing of these farms will be considerable... The stock and implements on each Instructor's farm when it is closed, will be made available for use on the reserves, and the farms will be either leased or sold as may be considered most profitable." Wage and maintenance expenses at the Saddle Lake agency farm did drop significantly in 1884:

Year.....Wage.....Maintenance

1881.....494.16

1882.....1,221.53.....1,507.90

1883.....1,916.12.....1,139.89

1884.....747.36.....558.59

1885.....1,671.91.....978.39

Canada Sessional Papers, Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1882-1886

30. Wadsworth, 1884, CSP, 47 Victoria, No. 4, p. 124: "Blue Quill... has agreed- I am informed by the Agent- to remove to Saddle Lake in the spring, and if he does so, the land broken up and worked as an Instructor's farm, will be divided amongst his followers. P. 125: "... it is my opinion that if in the future the supplies are landed from the steamers at Snake Hills, this storehouse and office [at Victoria] may be done away with."

31. Wadsworth, 1884, CSP, 47 Victoria, No. 4, p. 124

32. Wadsworth, 1885, CSP, 48 Victoria, No. 3, pp. 146-147

33. Wadsworth, 1885, CSP, 48 Victoria, No. 3, p. 147

34. Wadsworth, 1885, CSP, 48 Victoria, No. 3, p. 147

35. Noel Dyck, 1986, "An Opportunity Lost: The Initiative of the Reserve Agricultural Programme in the Prairie West" in Barron and Waldram, 1986, p. 128

36. Noel Dyck, 1986, p. 130. Dyck comments on page 127: "...Prime Minister Macdonald assured the House of Commons that the government was doing its best to keep expenditures low, reducing Indians to one-half and one-quarter rations and "refusing food until the Indians are on the verge of starvation."; Isabel Andrews, 1975, "Indian Protest Against

Starvation: The Yellow Calf Incident of 1884" in Saskatchewan History, 1975, Vol. 28, pp. 41-51

37. John Tobias, 1976, 'Canada's Subjugation of the Plains Cree' in Canadian Historical Review, 1983, Vol. LXIV, No. 4, pp. 531-532

38. Three clauses of the amendments to the Indian Act enacted on April 19, 1884, empowered:

1) the courts to imprison to a maximum of two years, anyone guilty of inciting to riot three or more aboriginal people.

2) the Superintendant General of Indian Affairs to prohibit the sale or gift of fixed ammunition or ball cartridges to the Indians of the North-West Territories.

3) the courts to imprison for 2 to 6 months, anyone involved in the Potlach and Tawanawa dance. Leslie and Maguire, 1978, p. 82

39. Dyck, 1986, p. 132

40. Dyck, 1986, p. 132

41. Anderson, 1886, CSP, 49 Victoria, No. 4, p. 70

42. Dewdney, 1886, CSP, 49 Victoria, No. 4, p. 143 ; John A. Mcdonald, 1885, CSP, 48 Victoria, No, 3, p. xlvi: "It is satisfactory to be able to report that a long-standing difficulty with Chief Seenum or Peccan... was, it is hoped, finally settled last autumn... This Chief held for many years a very exaggerated idea of the quantity of land to which his band was entitled. This erroneous conception was the result of inaccurate translating when the treaty was made."

43. Samuel Lucas, 1886, CSP, 49 Victoria, No. 4, p. 115

44. Samuel Lucas, 1886, CSP, 49 Victoria, No. 4, p. 115

45. J. B. Lash, 1886, CSP, 49 Victoria, No. 4, p. 125

46. It is probable that no Chiefs, including Big Bear and Poundmaker, were convinced that violent retaliation was worthwhile. Tobias, 1976, pp. 540-541 writes: "Because so many of Big Bear's original followers either joined Lucky Man, Thunderchild, or Little Pine's bands, Big Bear by 1884 was left with only the most recalcitrant opponents of the treaty. These individuals were only lukewarm in support of their chief's non-violent efforts to get the treaty revised.

47. Anderson, 1886, CSP, 49 Victoria, No. 4, p. 71

48. Donald Mclean, 1986, in Barron and Waldram (1986), pp. 79-104

49. Thomas Flanagan, 1983, Riel and the Rebellion: 1885 Reconsidered, Western Producer Prairie Books, Saskatoon. See also E.A. Michener, 1976, "The North Saskatchewan River Settlement Claims", L.H Thomas, (ed.), 1976, Essays On Western History , University of Alberta Press, Edmonton, pp. 129-143

## V. Chapter 5

### 1886-1905

For the Saddle Lake bands, the twenty post-rebellion years from 1886 to 1905 provided an ambiguous opportunity to adapt to a settled living pattern on reserves. The slight improvements in the quality of life that the members of the Saddle Lake, Whitefish Lake, Goodfish Lake, Blue Quill and Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic bands would experience into the first years of the twentieth century would be overshadowed by the economic and environmental constraints imposed by an ongoing Euro-Canadian population expansion. Demographically a majority of the Alberta population in 1885, the aboriginal people would become, within less than a decade, a minority, and by 1905, would represent at the most ten per cent of the provincial population.[1]

As if inherent in the reduction of their proportionate population, a diminution of their rights would also occur. The principal architect of this genocidal policy was the Canadian federal government who, during this period, pushed through decreasing per-capita expenditures for Indian people. DIA administrators, such as Lawrence Vankoughnet, Edgar Dewdney and Hayter Reed under John A. Macdonald and Mackenzie Bowell until 1896 and Clifford Sifton, D. Smart and A. E. Forget under Sir Wilfrid Laurier until 1911, were wholly responsible in allowing themselves to dictate and implement a policy of oppression upon the aboriginal people, not only in the west, but throughout Canada.

Figure 5.1 indicates DIA per-capita expenditures in Manitoba and the North West Territories for the period 1886-1905. One can see from Figure 5.1 that the Macdonald administration continued to decrease per-capita expenditures.[2] After 1896, Laurier's administration initially increased but then fluctuated per-capita expenses in the lower $30 per annum range. The main feature of these expenditures indicates that provisions and supplies were drastically reduced from 1886 to 1895 and stabilized from then on. The shift of expenditures occurred in the increase of education at an almost logarithmic rate; by 1905 it comprised the largest portion of DIA expenditures. The per-capita expenditures for schools went primarily into industrial and boarding schools. The local day schools were chronically underfunded. Surprisingly, agricultural costs comprised very little of the total DIA budget.

Long-term economic suppression was not the only insiduous activity of DIA. A class-racist policy also dictated the suppression of the aboriginal culture by prohibiting traditional cultural and social practices. The 'gopher' who carried out this policy was usually the local Indian agent. Operating under a hierarchy of superiors including, in descending order of authority, the Prime Minister, the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, the Deputy Superintendent-General, the Indian Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and the Inspectors of Agencies, the local agent provided the tactical groundwork to establish

Figure 5.1 Per Capita Expenditures for Treaty Indians of Manitoba & North west Territories, 1886-1905
Source Canada Sessional Papers, 1887-1905

DIA policies. The resultant policies will be elaborated upon in this chapter.

The immediate effects of the rebellion were evident in two widespread policy implementations, namely, the pass-system imposed on all bands and the cut-off of annuity payments to dissident bands and individuals. The government knew that the pass-system was not only an abrogation of the treaties, it was a violation of basic human rights. However, this did not prevent its implementation to prohibit the Indian people from visiting towns and villages outside of the reserves. The Indian Commissioner, Hayter Reed commented in 1890:

> The difficulties in the way of keeping them from so doing are very great, because they are not compelled by the terms of treaty to stay on their reserves. A good deal, however, has been done lately, by prosecuting, or threatening prosecution under the Vagrant Act and availing ourselves of such means as exist for marking our displeasure towards those who leave without first having obtained passes.[3]

Because of the rebellion, a small number of band members from the Saddle Lake area were briefly incarcerated on charges of treason-felony for having raided the HBC stores in such locations as Lac La Biche; they were later released from jail in March of 1886.[4] These members were not given their annuity payments until 1889.[5]

In Saddle Lake, the agent commanded a great deal of arbitrary control and prosecuting power as an ex-officio justice of the peace which was arranged by amending the Indian Act in the early 1890s.[6] By this means, John Ross, the agent, was able, for instance, to evict visitors from the Saddle Lake reserve in 1891 and to control the movement of band members by adhering to the pass system.[7] By 1893, he was able to comment that he received full co-operation from band members.[8] This prosecution-control position was not, however, the extent of his undermining role. The other manipulative policy implementations undertaken by the agent included scrip-related treaty withdrawals, ration cut-offs, band removals, and land surrenders. All of these tactics occurred at the Saddle Lake agency during this period of time.

Scrip-related treaty withdrawals accounted for a significant reduction of treaty members after 1886 (Table 5.1).[9] The withdrawals were seen by the government as a convenient method of lowering the expenses of DIA. The treaty withdrawals, in exchange for land or money scrip, were included within the mandate of the Half-Breed Commission established by an Order-in-Council on March 30, 1885.[10] The federal government called this commission to rectify Metis grievances over outstanding land claims.

Like other assimilationist tactics such as enfranchisement and treaty withdrawal because of extra-treaty marriage, the scrip-related treaty withdrawals

| | 1886 | 1887 | 1888 | 1889 | 1890 | 1891 | 1892 | 1893 | 1894 | 1895 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Manitoba & North West Territories | 30,578 | 23,811 | 26,368 | 25,594 | 25,743 | 24,210 | 23,852 | 23,608 | 23,709 | 24,047 |
| Treaty Six | 7539 | 4738 | 5790 | 6068 | 5312 | 5561 | 5278 | 5642 | 5351 | 5466 |
| Saddle Lake Agency | 615 | 660 | 685 | 689 | 697 | 694 | 709 | 697 | 698 | 701 |
| Methodist | | | | | | | 400 | | | |
| Roman Catholic | | | | | | | 309 | | | |

| | 1896 | 1897 | 1898 | 1899 | 1900 | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Manitoba & North West Territories | 24,123 | 21,196 | 21,316 | 23,808 | 24,468 | 24,767 | 24,676 | 24,478 | 24,336 | 24,363 |
| Treaty Six | 5658 | 5855 | 5933 | 6061 | 6054 | 6159 | 6236 | 6216 | 5985 | 6106 |
| Saddle Lake Agency | 719 | 731 | 743 | 746 | 751 | 744 | 759 | 754 | 757 | 762 |
| Methodist | 370 | 378 | 383 | 375 | 379 | 358 | 352 | 350 | 351 | 352 |
| Roman Catholic | 349 | 352 | 359 | 369 | 370 | 386 | 407 | 404 | 406 | 410 |

Table 5.1 : Treaty Indian Population, 1886-1905
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1887-1906

had an immense impact on the aboriginal communities involved.[11] Withdrawals in the Saddle Lake region were predominantly directed at Peyasee's band at Lac La Biche and at the Beaver Lake band. According to the Saddle Lake agent, John Mitchell:

> During the month of August (1886), the Scrip Commission held sittings at several points in the district and a large number of half-breeds who were formerly in receipt of annuities were discharged from treaty and received scrip... great care was taken that none but those who would support themselves and families in the future were discharged.[12]

The vulnerability of the ex-treaty scrip holders to land scrip speculators inevitably led many scrip holders to sell their scrip, often at a fraction of face value.[13] Because of the treaty withdrawals, Peyasee's band, which numbered 176 in 1885, were reduced to 10 members after the Commission issued scrip, and by 1892, only 5 members were under treaty.[14] Beaver Lake treaty discharges were limited to about 30 members leaving 135 members still under treaty.[15]

The tactic of cutting off rations was used by the agent, Mitchell, in 1889, to coerce the Beaver Lake band to relocate to Saddle Lake.[16] This coercion, however, was not successful. Beaver Lake's intransigence continued and rations continued to be cut off. Other reasons cited by DIA

for not providing rations included the refusal of the band to do work, the refusal to stop dancing and the use of narcotics, the last two activities being contraventions of the Indian Act.[17] Pressures to break up the band were maintained and some band members were transferred to the Edmonton agency, but the majority of band members continued to hunt and fish in the Beaver Lake area without any government assistance.[18]

With the expansion of the railway network from Regina to Prince Albert and from Calgary to Edmonton in 1891, attempts by DIA that had begun in the early 1880s to force the relocation of Blue Quill and Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic to Saddle Lake continued.

Blue Quill was relocated from Egg Lake in May of 1888, but it is not certain that he moved willingly.[19] The commissioner was also reluctant to consider two options for the terms of removal compensation, valued at $550 or $900, that were drawn up by the band. He preferred instead, a compensation scheme devised by the agent valued at $310.[20]

Blue Quill asked for a separate reserve, but DIA refused to survey one for him. Instead, DIA arranged for all the bands to be amalgamated into one reserve. While the Commissioner, Reed, acknowledged that Blue Quill had requested a separate reserve, Reed wrote to the Deputy Superintendent-General in October of 1891:

> ...it would seem from the book of plans published by the Department that Pakan and his band, Little

> Hunter's band and Blue Quill and his band hold one reserve in common.[21]

Even though reserves had been surveyed at Was-kat-ee-now in 1887 as well as at Whitefish Lake and Saddle Lake, DIA insisted that Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic's band be removed from the newly surveyed reserve and be relocated at Saddle Lake(Figure 5.2).[22] The tactics used were those typical of land surrender procedures at Pas-Pass-Chase in 1888 and at Bear's Hills beginning in 1897.[23] By the summer of 1891, the agent, Ross, had begun to transfer members to Saddle Lake so as to break up Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic's band.[24] The Superintendent-General, Lawrence Vankoughnet, indicated the acceptance of this surrender strategy in September of 1891 to Indian Commissioner Reed who orchestrated the middle position between the Superintendent-General and the Indian agents:

> The department approves of your recommendation that the Indians be breaked in much the same way as the Indians of Pass-Pass-Chase's reserve... which is to obtain a surrender from them of their reserve.[25]

Reed's position in the surrender procedures indicates that he was always attempting to undermine the interests of the Indians involved but the Superintendent-General ultimately decided upon a more 'tactful' usurpation of the band's reserve. This is reflected in the following excerpts of communications between Reed and the agent in August, 1891 and November, 1892 and between Vankoughnet and Reed in April

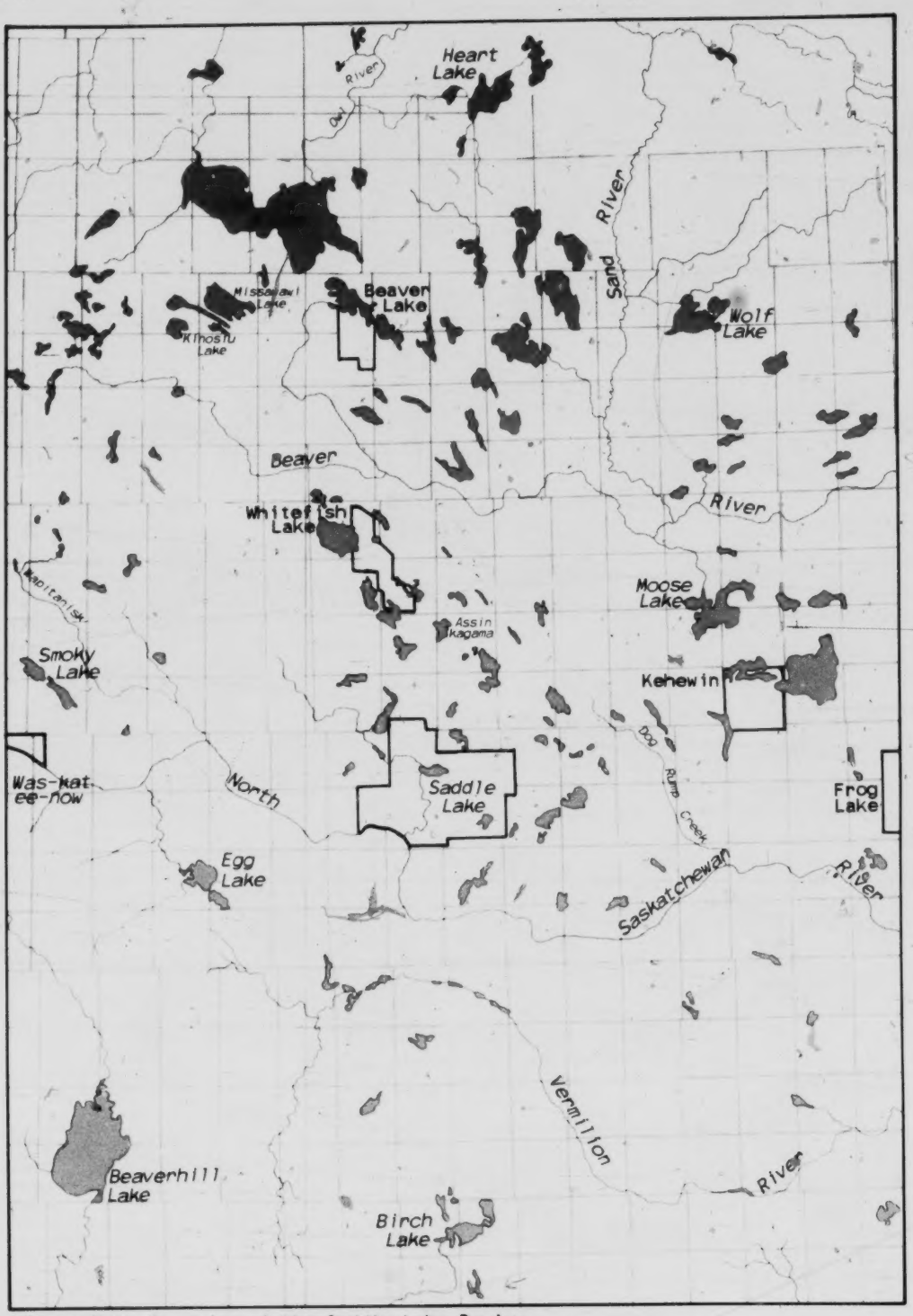


Figure 5.2 : Reserves of the Saddle Lake Region
Source : Government of Canada, NWMP Territorial Posts, 1891

of 1893 :

> [Reed to Ross] I do not consider it advisable to increase the area of the Saddle Lake reserve on account of Bears' Ears band being transferred to that locality.[26]
>
> The Wahsatnow lands are so favourably situated in a district that is being fast settled up that they will be sure to bring good prices at an early date and so realize a fund much more beneficial to the Indians than an addition to a reserve which is already larger than they really want, could possibly be. You should reason in this direction with the Indians, and watch your opportunity when sentiment seems favourable, to get them to agree.[27]
>
> [Vankoughnet to Reed] With regard to the concluding portion of your letter in which you say that as the Indians of the Was-sat-ee-now band already have a large amount of land in proportion to the number now left on the reserve, it might be advisable to induce them to accept a somewhat reduced area in exchange near the Saddle Lake reserve, I fail to see why the department should to the disadvantage of the Wah-sat-ee-now Indians, accept of a smaller area, more especially as you state... that the lands in the Wah-sat-ee-now tract are far superior in quality to those that may be taken in exchange near the Saddle Lake reserve.[28]

Even though the Was-kat-ee-now band did not want to move to Saddle Lake, the band members were finally forced to relocate in 1893.[29] Having been primarily engaged in hunting while residing at Was-kat-ee-now, they continued this activity at Saddle Lake with a minimal orientation towards crop raising. In 1894, some of the Was-kat-ee-now band members returned to their former reserve and brought with them their cattle.[30] Mus-keg-ah-wah-tic's brother had established a stopping place here before they were forced to relocate. The success of this enterprise may have been one reason why he and his family as well as other families would have wanted to return to Wah-sat-ee-now. DIA maintained, however, that the band members were in the possesion of stolen property since the cattle were, by arbitrary decision, the property of the department. Government assistance was cut-off and the cattle were transferred to Saddle Lake, but five families remained at Was-kat-ee-now until at least 1896.[31] Other band members were reported, according to agency inspector Wadsworth, to have scattered, some being at Victoria and others at Beaver Hills.[32] The remaining band members were probably forced to move back to Saddle Lake, although there is no indication of this in the available records.

The accommodation of the Was-kat-ee-now band into Saddle Lake had involved the transfer of some members from Thomas Hunter's band to the Blue Quill band in order to make room for the incoming members of Was-kat-ee-now. DIA's main

strategy in this transfer was to unify the members by religious affiliation.[33] Thus the Catholic members from Thomas Hunter's band, which was predominantly Methodist, were forced to move and join into Blue Quill's Catholic band. The transfers, like the removals, proved to be quite coercive but they eventually occurred despite the resistance of the members concerned.[34]

The adoption of Methodist and Roman Catholicism in the 1850s and 1860s by the Saddle Lake bands had significant implications for the later development of education on the reserve. In the early 1890s, the number of agency members belonging to the Methodist and Catholic denominations were 400 and 309, respectively. By 1905, the proportions had reversed with 410 Catholics and 352 Methodists (Table 5.1). Each denomination developed its own school system. Although the Methodists had, at some time, aboriginal teachers such as Peter Erasmus and Reverend Henry Bird Steinhauer, the Catholics recruited only Euro-Canadians for its church and school functions within the Saddle Lake agency. In 1891, a Catholic day school was started at Blue Quill's reserve.[35] Attendance at the four schools averaged between 40% and 60% of the registered students depending on the season of the year.[36] The day school curriculum provided basic academic subjects including reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic and geography as well as vocational subjects such as basket-weaving, knitting and sewing. The content of the curriculum emphasized Euro-Canadian acculturation and

Christian values through the Sunday Schools since this was consistent with the government's and churches' expression of 'civilizing' the 'barbaric' aboriginal people.[37]

Boarding and industrial schools were integrated into the day school schedule in the late 1880s and many students began to be transferred away from home to these regional schools. The boarding and industrial schools soon accounted for the bulk of expenses within DIA and were almost entirely administered and staffed through the religious orders.

The Saddle Lake and Whitefish/Goodfish Lake students who attended these schools went to the Methodist-run Red Deer Industrial School or to the Catholic-run Lac La Biche Boarding School (Tables 5.2 and 5.3).[38] In 1895, the Lac La Biche Boarding School was relocated to Blue Quill's portion of the Saddle Lake reserve.[39]

The vocational education of the children was essentially oriented at replacing the traditional industries of hunting, fishing and trapping with agriculture and wage labour. Thus the europanisation of the Indian people was one of the main goals of DIA.

The extent of this cultural assimilation at Saddle Lake was largely reflected in an almost universal adoption of grain-farming and cattle-raising as well as house and stable construction amongst the members. Thus, even though hunting, fishing and trapping were still practised by a large number of band members, their predominant sources of revenue after 1885, were reoriented by market pressures into agriculture

| | | M | F | Children | School | H | S | Ac. | Cattle |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blue Quill Family | 1 | * | * | | | ⊓ | | 2 | 5 |
| | 2 | * | * | 2 | | | | | |
| | 3 | * | * | 1 | LLB | | | 5 | 26 |
| | 4 | * | * | 1 | LLB | | | | |
| | 5 | * | | | | | | 3 | 5 |
| | 6 | * | | | | ⊓ | | | |
| | 7 | * | | | | ⊟ | 2 | 4 | 14 |
| | 8 | * | | 1 | LLB | ⊓ | | 3 | 9 |
| | 9 | * | | | | ⊓ | | 2 | |
| | 10 | * | | 7 | | ⊓ | 2 | 6 | 19 |
| | 11 | * | * | 4+2 | | ⊓ | 2 | 3 | 20 |
| | 12 | * | * | 3 | LLB | ⊓ | | 6 | 16 |
| | 13 | * | * | | | ⊓ | | 5 | 10 |
| | 14 | * | * | 1 | LLB | ⊟ | | 3 | 11 |
| | 15 | * | | | | ⊓ | | 6 | 9 |
| | 16 | * | | | | ⊓ | | 4 | 2 |
| | 17 | * | * | | | ⊓ | | 3 | 2 |
| | 18 | * | | | | ⊓ | | 2 | 2 |
| | 19 | * | | | | ⊓ | | | 3 |
| | 20 | * | | | | ⊓ | | 4 | 4 |
| Averages | | | | | | | | 3 | 8 |
| Saddle Lake Family | 1 | * | * | 5 | | ⊓ | | 4 | 6 |
| | 2 | * | * | 6 | RD | ⊓ | | 6 | 14 |
| | 3 | * | * | 6 | RD, RD | ⊓ | 2 | 6 | 21 |
| | 4 | * | * | 4 | LLB | ⊓ | 2 | 8 | 21 |
| | 5 | * | * | 7 | RD, LLB | | 2 | 16 | 29 |
| | 6 | * | * | 4 | | ⊟ | 2 | 13 | 40 |
| | 7 | * | * | 2 | | ⊓ | | 9 | 14 |
| | 8 | * | * | 4 | RD | ⊓ | | 10 | 22 |
| | 9 | * | * | 2 | | ⊟ | 2 | | 47 |
| | 10 | * | * | 1 | | ⊓ | | 12 | 15 |
| | 11 | * | | | | ⊓ | | | 1 |
| | 12 | * | | 1 | RD | | | | |
| | 13 | * | | 1 | RD | ⊓ | | | |
| Averages | | | | | | | | 6.25 | 18 |

Table 5.2 : Family Survey of Saddle Lake and Blue Quill, 1896
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1897, No. 14

Note : M - Male F - Female
H House S - Stable
LLB - Lac La Biche Boarding School
RD - Red Deer Industrial School
Ac. - Acres Cropped
⊓ - 1 Story
⊟ - 2 Story

| Goodfish Lake | | M | F | Children | School | H | S | Ac. | Cattle |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Family | 1 | * | * | 4 | | D | 3 | 6 | 9 |
| | 2 | * | * | 2 | | D | | 7 | 1 |
| | 3 | * | * | 1 | | D | 2 | 2 | |
| | 4 | * | * | 3 | | D | | | 5 |
| | 5 | * | * | 2 | | D | 2 | 1 | 8 |
| | 6 | * | * | 3 | | D | | | 16 |
| | 7 | * | * | 5 | RD | D | 3 | 2 | 13 |
| | 8 | * | * | 5 | RD,RD | D | 2 | 9 | 11 |
| | 9 | * | * | 3 | RD,RD | D | | | 17 |
| | 10 | * | * | 1 | | D | | 2 | 10 |
| | 11 | * | * | 1 | | D | | 4 | 4 |
| | 12 | * | * | 2 | LLB | D | | 2 | 4 |
| | 13 | * | * | 3 | RD | D | 2 | .5 | 13 |
| | 14 | * | * | 3 | | D | 2 | | 7 |
| | 15 | * | * | 5 | RD | D | | | 6 |
| | 16 | * | * | 4 | | D | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| | 17 | * | | | | D | 2 | 1 | 9 |
| | 18 | * | * | 5 | | D | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| | 19 | * | ** | 10 | RD | D | 2 | 7 | 6 |
| | 20 | * | * | 1 | | D | | 2 | 4/5 |
| | 21 | | * | 2 | | D | | 5 | 6 |
| | 22 | | | | | D | | | 2 |
| | 23 | | * | | | D | | | 3 |
| | 24 | * | * | | RD | D | | | 10 |
| Averages | | | | | | | | 2.25 | 8 |

| Whitefish Lake | | M | F | Children | School | H | S | Ac. | Cattle |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Family | 1 | * | * | 1 | | D | 2 | 9 | 22 |
| | 2 | * | * | 1 | | D | | 5 | 5 |
| | 3 | * | * | 4 | RD,RD | D | 2 | 25 | 23 |
| | 4 | * | * | | | D | | | |
| | 5 | * | * | | | D | | 1 | 5 |
| | 6 | * | * | 2 | RD | D | | | 8 |
| | 7 | * | * | | | D | | | 6 |
| | 8 | * | * | 3 | RD | D | 2 | 10 | 7 |
| | 9 | * | * | 5 | RD,RD | D | | 6 | 8 |
| | 10 | * | | 2 | | | | | 2 |
| | 11 | * | * | 7 | RD,LLB | B | 3 | 2 | 15 |
| | 12 | * | * | 3 | LLB | | | 1 | 4 |
| | 13 | * | * | 1 | | D | | .5 | 1 |
| | 14 | * | * | 4 | | D | | 2 | 2 |
| | 15 | * | | | | D | | .5 | 2 |
| | 16 | * | | | | D | 2 | 6 | 5 |
| | 17 | * | * | 5 | | B | | | |
| | 18 | * | * | 4 | | D | | 4 | 8 |
| | 19 | * | * | 3 | | D | 2 | 3 | 8 |
| | 20 | * | * | 1 | | D | | 3 | 3 |
| | 21 | * | * | 2 | | D | | .25 | |
| | 22 | * | * | 5 | | D | | 2 | 2 |
| | 23 | * | * | 1 | | D | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| | 24 | * | * | 3 | | D | 3 | 3 | 19 |
| | 25 | | * | | | D | | | 2 |
| Averages | | | | | | | | 3.5 | 6 |

Table 5.3 : Family Survey of Whitefish Lake and Goodfish Lake
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1897, No. 14

and wage labour.

However, the integration of wage labour into Saddle Lake was a slow and often discontinous process. Even when wage labour was in demand, the remunerative value of the work was often minimal. The Indian Commissioner went so far as to say in 1889, regarding the policy of wage labour in DIA :

> ... not only is the work of Indians, for which lower wages are paid, being largely substitued for that of white men at the agencies and reserves, but much which the latter were in past years necessarily paid to do is now performed gratuitously by the Indians themselves.[40]

Some contracts were awarded to band members. These included mail delivery, hay supplies for the telegraph line, survey assistance and road and bridge work.[41]

A great amount of labour went into the construction of bridges and roads, with little financial return for the bands. While the territorial government was constitutionally responsible for road and bridge construction outside of the reserves, they did not accept this responsability in the outlying, unsettled portions of their territory.[42] The work involved in road construction by the bands is well described in the following account from the agent :

> During the current month [June, 1896], the Indians of the Whitefish Reserve did eleven miles of good and necessary road-work on the main trail between

> Lac La Biche and Edmonton. After putting the roads and bridges on the Whitefish Lake Reserve in a capital state of repair, they continued their work south to Cache Creek; they cut out new roads through the bush and graded them, repaired the bridges and sections of the old trail that had become dangerous...
>
> This work is supposed to be done by the North-West Government, but no help of this kind is given to this section of the electoral district. A new ferry has been put across the Saskatchewan above the Crooked Rapids, and about twelve miles above the agency. I have had a road built from Blue Quill's reserve to this ferry. This work entailed four miles of cutting through timber and thick brush by the Indians of Blue Quill's Band and the road now completed is a good one and wide.[43]

Apart from this work, some band members were engaged in freighting and working on steamboats and barges on the Athabasca and North Saskatchewan Rivers.[44] Gold panning was also done by some members along the North Saskatchewan River.[45] One band member had made an application in 1900 to cut timber from government-controlled land to deliver 500 logs to Battleford by floating them downstream on the North Saskatchewan.[46]

While fur trading did occur a little at Saddle Lake, the bands of Beaver Lake and Heart Lake were more involved

in trapping since they were located within the margins of the boreal forest. The steady decline of animals for hunting and trapping meant that band members were forced to travel further and further afield to have any success.[47] Fishing on local lakes was generally good although depletions occurred in the late 1880s on certain local fishing lakes.[48]

A certain amount of agricultural produce in surplus was sold by band members but the presence of restrictive clauses in the Indian Act did not allow them to have complete freedom to be involved in trade.[49] In 1894, DIA loosened the restrictions regarding trade but did not eliminate them.[50]

Despite the initiatives taken on by the bands to participate in the territorial economy, per-capita income remained very low (Figure 5.3). In comparison with Euro-Canadian wage earners who averaged between $200 and $750 per year, the families of the Saddle Lake agency earned below average incomes throughout this period.[51] Lack of formal trades qualifications would have relegated the work 'value' of the band members to the lower-paying sector of the labour market when work was available.

Regardless of the general exclusion from the Euro-Canadian labour market, the Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake band members did work continuously on construction and improvements throughout their reserves.

Log housing construction steadily increased and improved over the years although no houses of the frame or brick type were built. Tents were usually preferred as

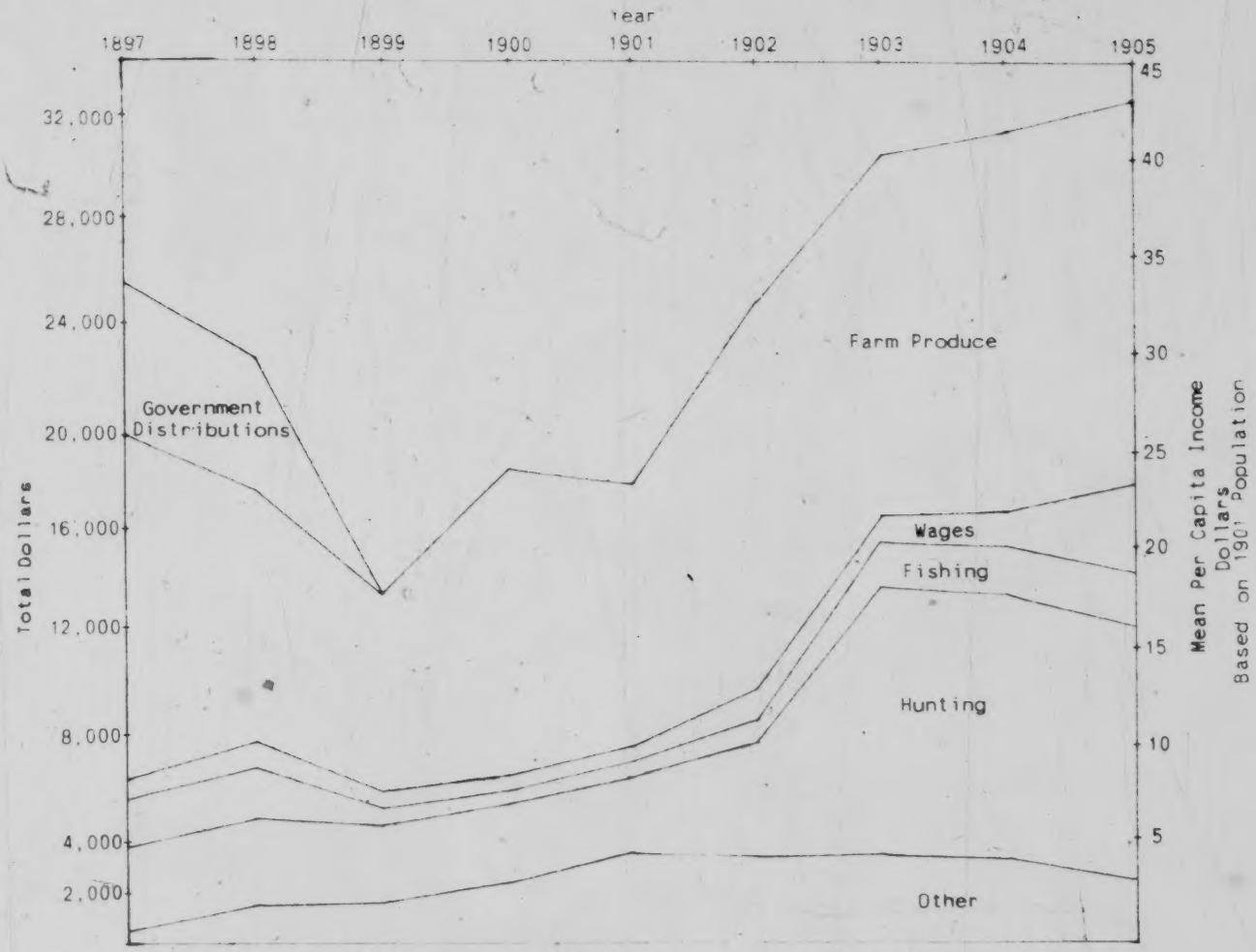


Figure 5.3 : Per Capita Income, Saddle Lake Agency, 1897-1905
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1898-1906

accommodation during the summer months.[52] Band members also collaborated in the construction of stables and barns and agency buildings such as offices, ration-houses, storehouses, sheds, and a blacksmith shop at Whitefish Lake.[53] The erection of extensive rail fences around cropped acreage took up a considerable amount of time especially after spring fires such as the one of 1889 which destroyed a significant proportion of the existing fences.[54] Besides the major construction work, a number of items such as furniture, baskets, ox yoke, sleighs and canoes were also built by band members on a regular basis.[55] In 1897, small grist mills were made for Euro-Canadian settlers in exchange for grain seed.[56]

The log and lumber supplies were greatly facilitated by the introduction of a steam-powered saw-mill in 1892. Band members were asked to contribute $300 of their annuity money that year towards the purchasing cost of an engine that would also serve to power a grist mill and a thresher.[57] DIA also demanded a 'toll' equivalent to 25% of all logs and lumber cut from the sawmill, for purposes of agency construction.[58] Yearly production averaged approximately 60,000 boardfeet although, in some years, such as in 1899, the production total reached 160,000 boardfeet.[59] Because the local supply of timber was not always sufficient, the sawmill would be transferred from its usual place at Whitefish Lake to other locations such as Beaver River. Most of the log and lumber production usually took place during

the winter months when timber retrieval and transportation could be done more easily. The following excerpt from the agent's report provides an account of the work involved in the winter milling operation at Beaver River:

> In March (1894),... the millwright... transferred the engine and sawmill machinery from the reserve to the lumber camp on Beaver River- a distance of fifteen miles. He took thirty Indians and twelve teams with him, built sheds and set up the mill on the bank, close to the river. In a short time, roads were cleared to the timber, distant one mile from the mill-site, and over one thousand logs were speedily cut and hauled and sawn into lumber. Seventy-two thousand feet were sawn and piled in nineteen days, and the engine and all the lumber transported to the reserve before sleighing ended.[60]

Perhaps the most significant growth of industry in Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake occurred in livestock production (Figures 5.4 and 5.5). From a livestock count of approximately 100 to 200 head in the years 1886 and 1887, the number of livestock of all types, rose steadily to reach a peak of 1300 head in 1900. After 1900, the livestock count averaged approximately 1000 head, yearly.

The DIA exercised a considerable degree of control over livestock production and use throughout the period of 1886 to 1905. For instance, all of the livestock in the Was-kat-ee-now band and in Blue Quill's band were under

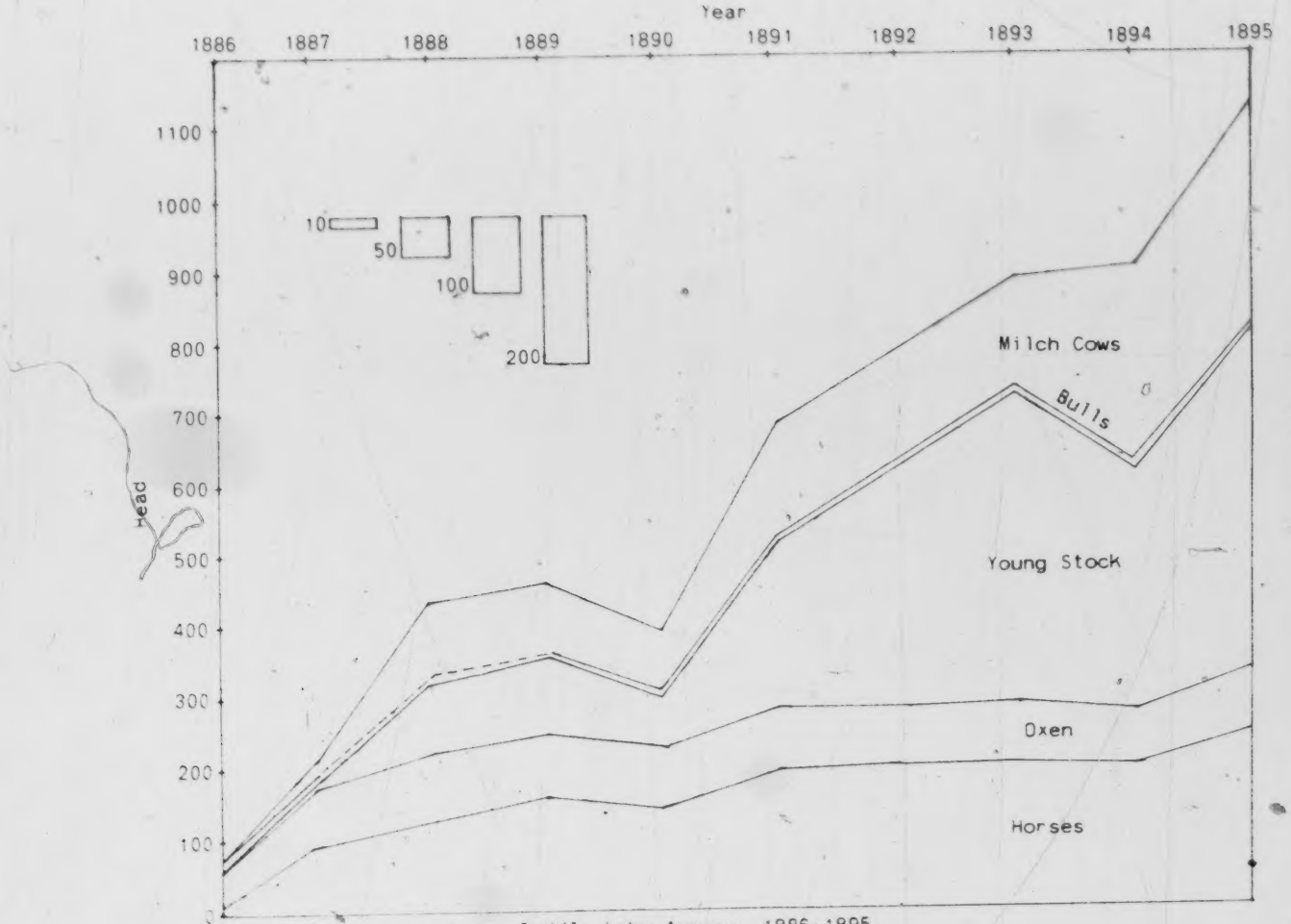


Figure 5.4 : Livestock, Saddle Lake Agency, 1886-1895
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1887-1896

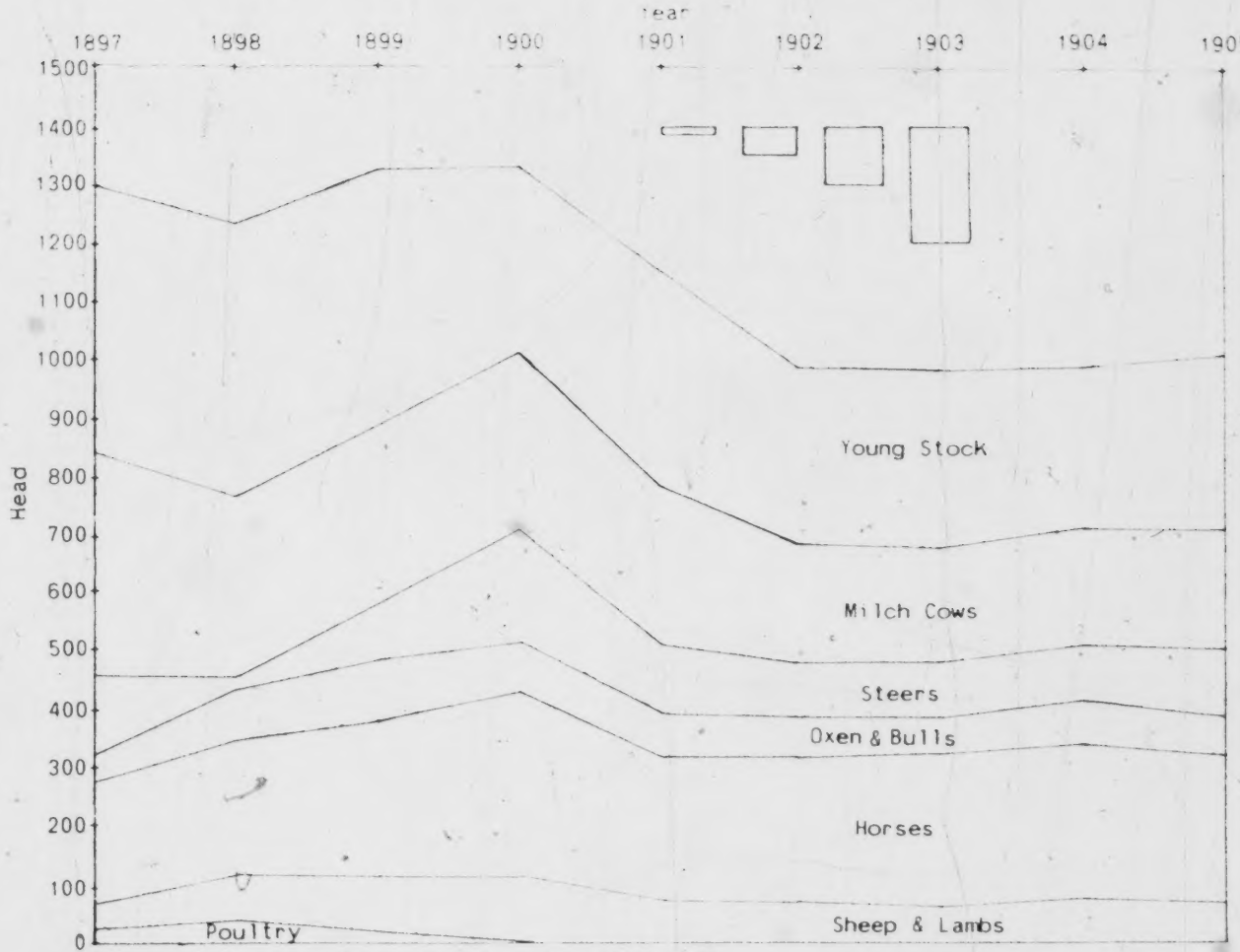


Figure 5.5 : Livestock, Saddle Lake, 1897-1905
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1898-1906

departmental control.[61] In Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake, the department controlled between 35% and 45% of the herd.[62] All of the horses were privately owned. To control the rotation of stock, DIA's cattle were branded but band members preferred to have their own cattle unbranded.[63] Other livestock control policies included the killing of younger cattle for consumption and for the sale of beef.[64] Thus, the cattle that were 'on loan' to band members could not be killed or sold unless authorized to do so. Although DIA had discouraged the raising of milch cows because beef cattle were 'more profitable', the number of milch cows steadily increased over the years.[65] Milk was thus consumed regularly and butter was produced as well.[66]

The average herd size per family in the mid 1890s was : 8 at Blue Quill, 18 at Saddle Lake, 8 at Goodfish Lake, and 6 at Whitefish Lake (Tables 5.2 and 5.3). [67] The greatest variation in the number of cattle per family was found at Saddle Lake while the least variation occurred at Goodfish Lake; however, when family size is taken into consideration, this disparity factor becomes relatively insignificant (Table 5.4).[68] A high degree of equality thus existed amongst the band members in terms of livestock ownership.

The raising of livestock required a substantial amount of hay. Generally, there was no shortage of hay for grazing or to be collected. However, the transport and storage of hay for individual herds was more difficult in winter. Cattle were thus pooled by band members and wintered at more

| Family | Blue Quills | | | Saddle Lake | | | Whitefish Lake | | | Goodfish Lake | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | DAHS | HS/FM | DAHS/FM | DAHS | HS/FM | DAHS/FM | DAHS | HS/FM | DAHS/FM | DAHS | HS/FM | DAHS/FM |
| 1 | 3 | 2.5 | 1.11 | 12 | .86 | 2.44 | 16 | 7.33 | 5.57 | 1 | 1.5 | .72 |
| 2 | .67 | 2.6 | 1.01 | 4 | 1.75 | 1.55 | 1 | 1.25 | .51 | 7 | .25 | 1.97 |
| 3 | .67 | 2.6 | 1.01 | 3 | 2.63 | .67 | 17 | 3.83 | 2.07 | 8 | 0 | 2.22 |
| 4 | .67 | 2.6 | 1.01 | 3 | 3.5 | .2 | 6 | 0 | 1.76 | 3 | 1 | 1.22 |
| 5 | 3 | 5 | 1.39 | 11 | 3.22 | .08 | 1 | 2.5 | .74 | 0 | 2 | .22 |
| 6 | 8 | | 3.61 | 22 | 6.66 | 3.36 | 2 | 2 | .24 | 8 | 3.2 | 1.02 |
| 7 | 6 | 14 | 10.39 | 4 | 3.5 | .2 | 0 | 3 | 1.24 | 5 | 1.86 | .36 |
| 8 | 1 | 4.5 | .89 | 4 | 3.67 | .37 | 1 | 1.4 | .36 | 3 | 1.57 | .65 |
| 9 | 8 | | 3.61 | 29 | 11.75 | 8.45 | 2 | 1.14 | .62 | 9 | 3.4 | 1.18 |
| 10 | 11 | 2.11 | 1.5 | 3 | 5 | 1.7 | 4 | .66 | 1.1 | 2 | 3.33 | 1.11 |
| 11 | 12 | 2.5 | 1.11 | 17 | .5 | 2.8 | 9 | 1.67 | .09 | 4 | 1.33 | .89 |
| 12 | 8 | 3.2 | .41 | 18 | | 3.3 | 2 | .8 | .96 | 4 | 1 | 1.22 |
| 13 | 2 | 5 | 1.39 | 18 | | 3.3 | 5 | .33 | 1.43 | 5 | 2.6 | .38 |
| 14 | 3 | 3.66 | .05 | | | | 4 | .33 | 1.43 | 1 | 1.75 | .47 |
| 15 | 1 | 9 | 5.39 | | | | 4 | 2 | .24 | 2 | .86 | 1.36 |
| 16 | 6 | 2 | 1.61 | | | | 1 | 5 | 3.24 | 1 | .67 | 1.55 |
| 17 | 6 | 1 | 2.61 | | | | 6 | 0 | 1.76 | 4 | 9 | 6.78 |
| 18 | 6 | 3 | .61 | | | | 2 | 1.33 | .43 | 0 | 1.14 | 1.08 |
| 19 | 5 | 3 | .61 | | | | 2 | 1.6 | .16 | 2 | .46 | 1.76 |
| 20 | 4 | 4 | .39 | | | | 3 | .75 | 1.01 | 4 | 2 | .22 |
| 21 | | | | | | | 6 | 0 | 1.76 | 3 | 5 | 2.78 |
| 22 | | | | | | | 4 | .29 | 1.47 | 2 | 1.5 | .72 |
| 23 | | | | | | | 2 | 1 | .76 | 6 | 2 | .22 |
| 24 | | | | | | | 13 | 3.8 | 2.04 | 5 | 3 | .78 |
| 25 | | | | | | | 4 | 2 | .24 | 2 | 5 | 2.78 |
| Total | 95.01 | 72.27 | 39.71 | 148 | 43.04 | 28.42 | 117 | 44 | 31.25 | 91 | 55.5 | 33.75 |
| M | 4.75 | 3.61 | 1.98 | 11.38 | 3.3 | 2.19 | 4.68 | 1.76 | 1.25 | 3.64 | 2.22 | 1.35 |

DAHS - Deviation from Average Herd Size = n-m
HS/FM - Herd Size per Family Member = n-a
DAHS/FM - Deviation from Average Herd Size per Family Member = HS/FM-M
M - Mean

n - number of cattle per family
m - mean number of cattle per family
a - number of family members

Table 5.4 : Deviation From Herd Size , 1896
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1897, 60 Victoria, No. 14

remote locations such as Cache Lake and Floatingstone Lake.[69] Here, stables were built and a ready supply of water and stored hay was available throughout the winter months.

After 1900, the cattle stocks including oxen, began to decrease. The reasons for this, according to the agent, W. Sibbald, were due to animals being sold to purchase farm implements, the killing of yearling and 2 year olds for beef, and losses due to excessive winter conditions.[70] Apart from cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry were raised by band members, but not in significant numbers during this period.

Grain and vegetable farming was also an important industry at Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake but crop production, unlike cattle raising, was extremely prone to the effects of drought, frost and pests. Figures 5.6 and 5.7 outline the major crop harvests for the Saddle Lake agency from 1886 to 1905. The worst drought years were 1889, 1890, 1894 and 1900.[71] Rodents also destroyed a significant portion of crops at times.[72]

In the mid 1880s, barley dominated the sown acreage but by the early 1890s, wheat was also sown at an increasing rate. Following the droughts of 1894 and 1895, oats replaced barley production with wheat becoming the principal crop sown. After 1902, oats replaced wheat. The higher yield of oats coupled with an improved market for oats favoured the production of this crop over wheat.[73] Also, because of the necessity to mill the wheat at Whitefish Lake, some 35 miles from Saddle Lake, the acreage of wheat decreased

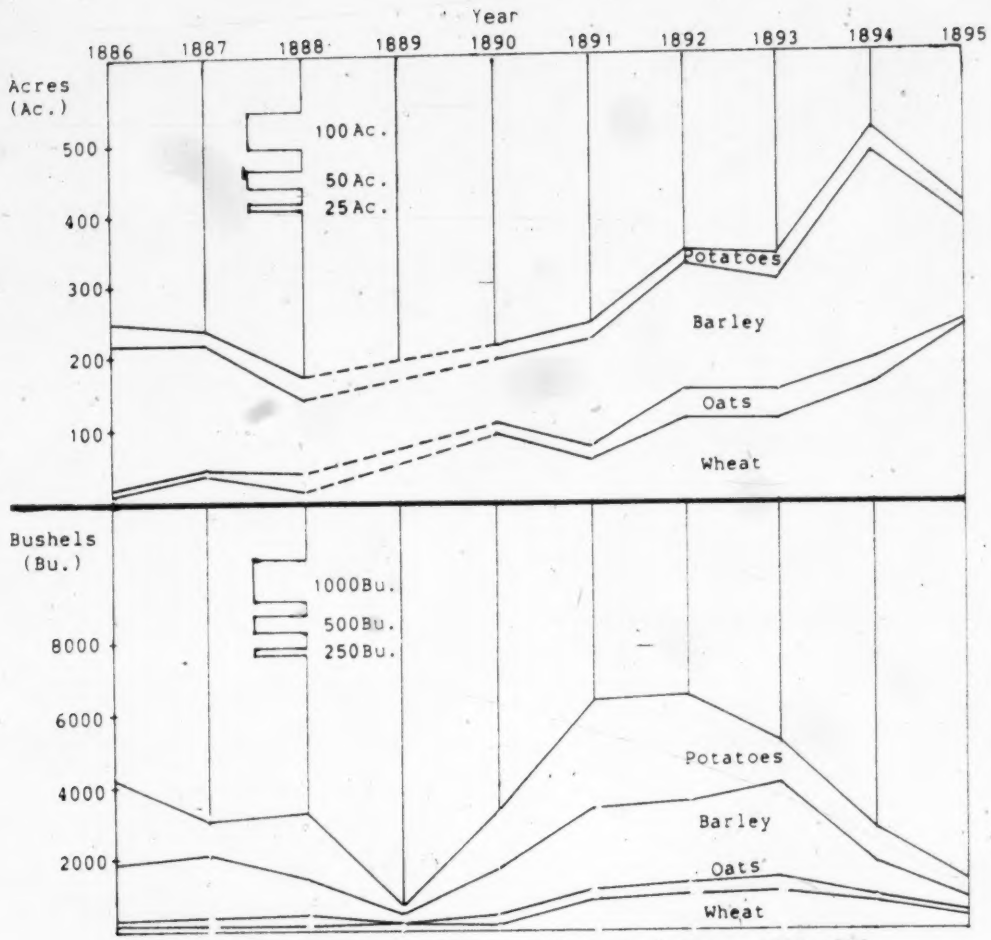


Figure 5.6 : Crop Production, Saddle Lake Agency, 1886-1896
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1887-1897

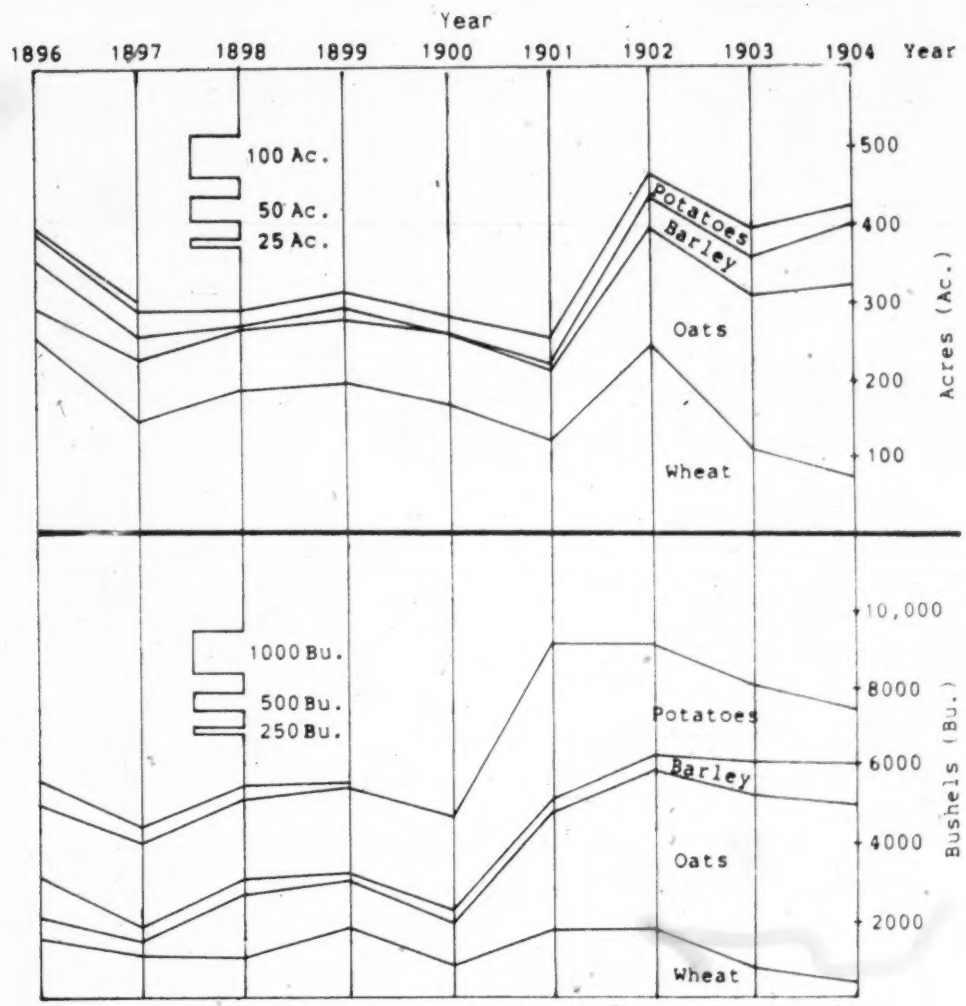


Figure 5.7 : Crop Production, Saddle Lake Agency, 1896-1905
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1898-1906

significantly in the Saddle Lake area.[74] The production of potatoes and turnips as well as other vegetables remained relatively constant throughout the period 1886-1905. Apart from the dry years, potatoes usually yielded approximately 70 bushels per acre, which was comparatively higher than any other crop.[75]

The use of advanced agricultural machinery was initially blocked by DIA, but over time, band members bought a considerable amount of implements such as ploughs, mowers and horse-rakes.[76] A grist-mill was also established at Whitefish Lake in 1892.[77] The grist-mill saved considerable time and effort that had been previously spent hauling grain to Edmonton to get it milled. By the late 1890s, the Whitefish Lake grist-mill was milling grain for settlers in the area.[78] The amount of grain milled per year depended on crop yields. Generally, the average amount milled was equivalent to 300 sacks of flour.

The band total of acreage sown by band members remained relatively small throughout this period. After peaking at approximately 500 acres in 1894, only an average of 300 acres were sown until 1901. After 1901, the average climbed again to 450 acres.

The size of individual family fields was not large. In 1894, family fields ranged from .5 acres to 25 acres. The average size of fields were: 2.25 acres at Goodfish Lake, 3.5 acres at Whitefish Lake, 3 acres at Blue Quill, and 6.25 acres at Saddle Lake (Tables 5.2 and 5.3). Since the largest

crop acreage was 25 acres, most of the band agriculture could be considered to have been subsistence-oriented.

Given the recurrence of crop failures throughout this period, the goal of self-sufficiency for band members, as envisioned by DIA, was not realistically attainable. Rations continued to be disbursed bi-monthly and only two families were considered by the agent to have achieved a degree of self-sufficiency.[79] However, at every instance that band members were either successful at hunting or the harvesting of crops, rations would be cut back.[80] A disagreement over the provisioning of the rations inevitably arose as it did in 1891.[81] DIA's overbearing control of agricultural production and marketing also disturbed band members. In 1894, Pakan along with Chiefs of the Edmonton, Peace Hills and Morley regions petitioned T. M. Daly, the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, to remove the control policy maintained by DIA over one-third of the agricultural production.[82]

It is difficult to determine with certitude from this cursory account, the success of post-rebellion initiatives by the Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake people to integrate their traditional lifestyle into that of Euro-Canadian immigrants. While DIA talked much about the benefits for the Indian people of direct and indirect contacts with the Euro-Canadian population, the grip that the government maintained on aboriginal self-determination throughout this period would effectively eliminate any advantages that a

more liberal integration could have brought for the aboriginal people. Euro-Canadian settlement advances and band removals followed by Indian reserve land surrenders revealed legal and moral contradictions in the goodwill of the Canadian government towards the Indian people.

Thus, from 1886 to 1905, Saddle Lake witnessed, without any means of either stopping or controlling this expansion, the advancing waves of immigrants and institutions that would change both the social character and the landscape of their native land (Figure 5.8). The effect of this settler encroachment on the Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake people will be the focus of the next chapter.

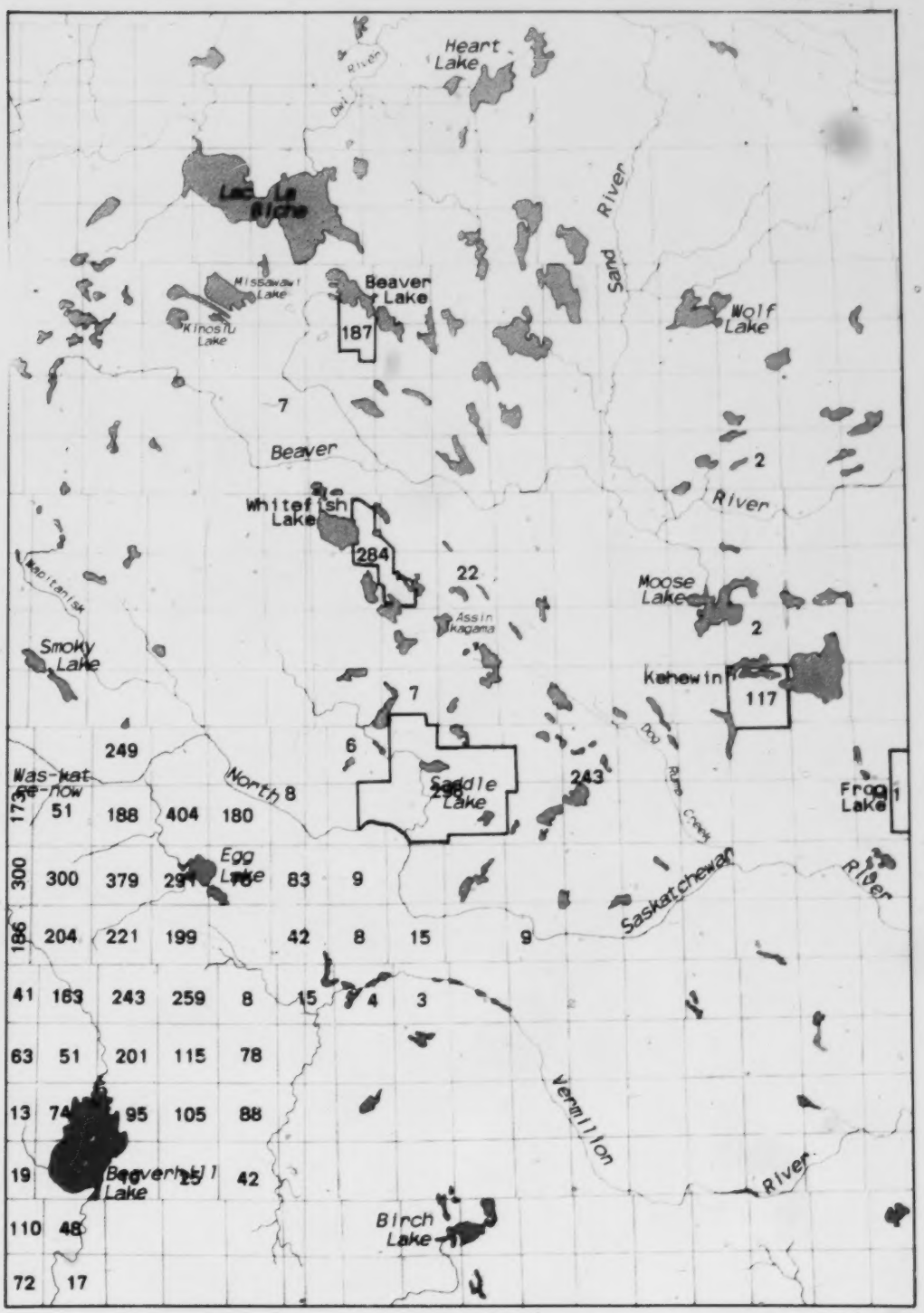


Figure 5.8 : Population in North Central Portion of Treaty Six, 1901

Source :Government of Canada, Alberta Census Map, Department of Agriculture, 1906

Notes

1. The population numbers for Alberta were as follows :

| Euro-Canadians | Aboriginals | % of Total | Year |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4,878 | 10,655 | 68.6 | 1885 |
| 28,783 | 12,500 | 30.3 | 1895 |
| 73,022 | 13,000 | 15.1 | 1901 |
| 185,412 | 13,500 | 6.8 | 1906 |

Included in the Euro-Canadian population of 1885 are 6 African and 8 Chinese people.

Sources for the population data are : Government of Canada Census (1885) ; Lewis Thomas (1958), The Struggle for Responsible Government in the North West Territories, 1870-1897, University of Toronto Press, Toronto ; Government of Canada, Department of Agriculture (1906) Alberta Census Map. See also Table 5.1 for western Canadian Indian population tabulations from 1886 to 1905.

2. Hayter Reed, 1890, CSP, 53 Victoria, No. 12, p. 1; DIA treaty expenditures at the Saddle Lake agency are recorded in detail for only one year, 1890, in the annual reports of the department :

| | |
|---|---|
| Annuities | 3,790.00 |
| Agricultural Implements | 875.48 |
| Seed | 1,128.02 |
| Cattle | 925.00 |
| Supplies | 18,680.81 |
| Clothing | 214.08 |

Day Schools.....1,351.21

Farm Wages.....1,570.00

Farm Maintenance.....997.13

General Expenses.....4,373.32

Agency Buildings.....219.09

Total.....34,124.14

CSP, 1891, 54 Victoria, No. 18, pp. 132-136

3. Hayter Reed, 1890, CSP, 53 Victoria, No. 12, p. 167

4. These were not the only people incarcerated because of the rebellion. See A. Blair Stonechild, 1986, "The Indian View of the 1885 Uprising" in Laurie Barron and James Waldram (eds.), 1885 and After, 1986, Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina.

5. Hayter Reed, 1890, CSP, 53 Victoria, No. 12, p. 160

6. See John Leslie and Ron Maguire (eds.), 1978, The Historical Development of the Indian Act, DIAND, Ottawa p. 98 ; Hayter Reed, 1892, CSP, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 192

7. John Ross, 1892, CSP, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 195 ; Ross to Reed, Public Archives of Canada (PAC), Record Group (RG) 10, Vol. 3599, File 1503, Reel C10104

8. Ross, 1892, CSP, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 195

9. Reed, 1890, CSP, 53 Victoria, no. 12, p. 159

10. D. J. Hall, 1977, "The Half-Breed Claims Commission" in Alberta History, 1977, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 4

11. W. P. Fillmore, 1978, "Half-Breed Scrip" and Peter Lowe, 1978, "All Western Dollars" in Antoine S. Lussier and Bruce Sealey (eds.), The Other Natives : The Metis (1885-1978),

1978, Manitoba Metis Federation, Winnipeg

12. John Mitchell, 1888, CSP, 51 Victoria, No. 15, p. 93

13. D. J. Hall, .1977, p. 5

14. Mitchell, 1890, CSP, 53 Victoria, No. 12, p. 75

15. T. P. Wadsworth, 1887, CSP, 50 Victoria, No. 6, p. 170

16. Mitchell, 1890, 53 Victoria, No. 12, p. 75 ; Ross, 1892, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 75 ; PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3600, File 1569

17. Reed, 1893, CSP, 56 Victoria, No. 14, p. 174 ; Ross, 1896, CSP, 58 Victoria, No. 14, p. 91 ; PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3600, File 1569

18. Ross, 1894, CSP, 57 Victoria, No. 14, p. 77 ; Ross, 1895, CSP, 58 Victoria, No. 14, p. 80

19. PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1503. A telegram exchange between Mitchell and Reed regarding the relocation occurred as follows :

[Mitchell to Reed] "Blue Quill likely to break agreement re: removal to Saddle Lake. All arrangements re: breaking and cattle completed, would pressure to limited extent by police."

[Reed to Mitchell] (18 Jan., 1887) - "You should be the best judge knowing all circumstances but be very guarded."

20. PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1503

21. Reed to Vankoughnet, PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3603, File 1879

22. J. Nelson, 1887, CSP, 50 Victoria, No. 6, pp. 178-181

23. See Stewart Raby (1973), "Indian Land Surrenders in Southern Saskatchewan" in Canadian Geographers, 1973, XVII,

No. 1, pp. 36-51 ; David Lupul, 1978, "The Bobtail Land Surrender" in Alberta History, 1978, Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 29-39; G. Sanders, 1980, "The Expropriation of Indian Reserve Lands and the Creation of a Non-Status population" in Metis Association of Alberta (MAA), Metis Land Rights, 1980, MAA, Edmonton, pp. 146 -179; Kenneth Tyler, 1984, The Pass-Pas-Chase Land Surrender : A Tax-eating Proposition, unpublished MA thesis, University of Alberta, for sources and information on land surrenders.

24. Ross, 1892, CSP, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 74

25. Vankoughnet to Reed, PAC, RG 10, Vol 3603, File 1879

26. Reed to Ross, PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3603, File 1879

27. Reed to Ross, PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3603, File 1879

28. Vangoughnet to Reed, PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3603, File 1879

29. Alex McGibbon, 1894, CSP, 57 Victoria, No. 14, p. 195

30. McGibbon, 1895, CSP, 58 Victoria, No. 14, p. 111

31. Ross, 1896, CSP, 59 Victoria, No. 14, p. 89;
PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3603, File 1879

32. Wadsworth, 1897, CSP, 60 Victoria, No. 14, p. 259

33. PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1503

34.Ross to Reed, 31 March 1891, PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3599, File 1503.

"After no end of evasion and procrastination on the part of the Indians interested and no little trouble on my part, I have at last succeeded in completing the arrangements for the transfer of the Roman Catholic Indian families from Thomas Hunter's reserve to that of Blue Quill."

35. Ross, 1893, CSP, 56 Victoria, No. 14, p. 174

36. Ross, 1894, CSP, 57 Victoria, No. 14, p. 78

37. See Jacqueline Gresko, 1975, "White 'Rites' and Indian 'Rites' : Indian Education and Native Responses in the West, 1870-1910" in A. W. Rasporich (ed.), Western Canada : Past and Present, 1975, Mclelland and Stewart, Toronto, pp. 163-182

38. DIA followed a policy of prohibiting the parents to visit the students during the school year: "... I must not forget to notice the success attained in preventing Indian visitors hanging about the schools, and so unsettling the minds of the children, as well as too often insisting upon carrying them off for visits to their homes, from which they would only be recovered with much difficulty if at all." Reed, 1892, CSP, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 201

39. Bishop Grandin, 1898, CSP, 61 Victoria, No. 14, p. 261. See also Diane Persson, 1980, Blue Quills: A Case Study of Indian Residential Schooling, unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton

40. Reed, 1890, CSP, 53 Victoria, No. 12, p. 162

41. Regarding the telegraph line, David Richeson (1983) writes : "Following the rebellion, work resumed on government plans to reconstruct major portions of the northern telegraph line between Humbolt and Edmonton - this time connecting settlements, Indian reserves, and NWMP posts... The route selected followed roughly along the Victoria trail between Battleford and Edmonton. Fears of

continuing Indian unrest prompted extensions of the telegraph to reserves such as Onion Lake, Saddle Lake and Stony Plain." David Richeson, 1983, "The Telegraph and Community Formation in the North-West Territories" in John Foster (ed.), The Developing West, 1983, The University of Alberta Press, Edmonton, pp. 146-147.

Regarding the surveys in the early 1900s of East-Central Alberta, see The Report of the Surveyor General, 1906, CSP, 5-6 Edward VII, no. 25a

42. Ross, 1897, CSP, 60 Victoria, No. 14, p. 201

43. Ross, 1897, CSP, 60 Victoria, No. 14, p. 201

44. Wadsworth, 1897, CSP, 60 Victoria, No. 14, p. 261
George Mann, 1906, CSP, 5-6 Edward VII, No. 25a, p. 150

45. W. Sibbald, 1898, CSP, 61 Victoria, No. 14, p. 170

46. W. J. Chisholm, 1901, CSP, 64 Victoria, No. 27, p. 169

47. Reed, 1893, CSP, 56 Victoria, No. 14, p. 174

48. Mitchell, 1889, CSP, 52 Victoria, No. 16, p. 87

49. By Order-in-Council of August 9, 1888, the restrictions on trade were reinforced thereby establishing the intent to prosecute Indians who violated the 30th and 31st clauses of the 1886 Act. The 1888 O-in-C read, in part, as follows : "No band or irregular band of Indians,... may, without the consent in writing of the Indian Agent for the locality, sell, barter, exchange, or give to any person... any grain or root crops or other produce grown on any Indian reserve in the North-West Territories..." Statutes of Canada (SC), 1889, 52 Victoria, Indian Affairs, O-in-C of 9 August, 1888,

pp. xlv-xlvi

50. Leslie and Maguire, 1978, p. 97

51. Labour rates for 1885 are found in the Canada Census of 1885 for the North-West Territories and for 1895 in CSP, 1895, 58 Victoria, No. 13, p. 94. Other labour rate information can be found in Lyle Dick, 1981, "Estimates of Farm-Making Costs in Saskatchewan, 1882-1914" in Prairie Forum, 1981, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 183-201.

52. Sibbald, 1899, CSP, 62 Victoria, No. 14, p. 163

53. McGibbon, 1896, CSP, 59 Victoria, No. 14, p. 246

54. Wadsworth, 1890, CSP, 53 Victoria, No. 12, p. 287

55. McGibbon, 1893, CSP, 56 Victoria, No. 14, p. 113

56. Sibbald, 1899, CSP, 62 Victoria, No. 14, p. 165

57. McGibbon, 1893, CSP, 56 Victoria, No, 14, p. 113

58. Sibbald, 1899, CSP, 62 Victoria, No. 14, p. 165

59. Sibbald, 1900, CSP, 63 Victoria, No. 14, p. 171-173

60. Ross, 1895, CSP, 58 Victoria, No. 14, p. 80

61. McGibbon, 1892, CSP, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 88

62. McGibbon, 1892, CSP, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 87

63. McGibbon, 1893, CSP, 56 Victoria, No. 14, p. 110-111

64. Reed, 1892, CSP, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 194

65. Ross, 1892, CSP, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 75

66. Ross, 1896, CSP, 59 Victoria, No. 14, p. 88

67. Ross, 1895, CSP, 58 Victoria, No. 14, p. 79
Five families had 136 head of cattle in 1894, both private and departmental.

68. The mean deviations from Herd Size were 3.64, 4.68, 4.75

and 11.38 while the mean deviations from herd size per family were 1.35, 1.25, 2.355, and 2.19 for Goodfish Lake, Whitefish Lake, Blue Quill, and Saddle Lake respectively. See Figure 5.6 for calculation equations and numerical summary.

69. Wadsworth, 1897, CSP, 60 Victoria, No. 14, pp.263

70. Chisholm, 1903, CSP, 2-3 Edward VII, No. 27, p. 183

71. Chisholm, 1901, CSP, 64 Victoria, No. 27, p. 195

72. Ibid

73. Chisholm, 1904, CSP, 3-4 Edward, VII, No. 27, p. 201

74. Ibid

75. Seed potatoes were purchased after crop failures such as that of 1894. Band members bought seed potatoes at the German settlement near Ft. Saskatchewan in 1895. Wadsworth, 1897, CSP, 60 Victoria, No. 14, p. 263

76. Commissioner Reed attempted to prohibit the purchasing of agricultural machinery, but his policy was not wholly enforced. In 1890, Reed wrote : "...when the Indians see whitemen in the possession of self binders and other costly inventions for saving labour, which the condition of the white man renders highly necessary they overlook the fact that the employment of such implements is only justifiable where manual laborers are comparatively scarce." Reed, 1890, 53 Victoria, No. 12, p. 162

77. The grist mill had begun to be built in 1889 but was not completed until 1892. Ross, 1893, CSP, 56 Victoria, No. 14, p. 173

78. Sibbald, CSP, 1900, 63 Victoria, p. 173

79. Ross, 1895, CSP, 58 victoria, No. 14, p. 79

80. Mitchell, 1887, CSP, 50 Victoria, p. 129

81. Ross, 1892, CSP, 55 Victoria, No. 14, p. 74

82. PAC, RG 10, Vol. 3917, Reel No. 116493

## VI. Chapter 6

## 1906-1930

The evolution of the Saddle Lake and Goodfish Lake communities during the early provincial period of Alberta reflected the ongoing struggle to develop cross-cultural relations with the dominant society while defending their own traditional values. The incessant infringement, by the Canadian government, upon their basic human rights through parliamentary instruments such as the Indian Act and other statutes, placed an inordinate amount of pressure upon Indian and Metis people to integrate their communities into the Euro-Canadian society under unequal sharing constraints.

Parliamentary amendments to the Indian Act between 1905 and 1930 continued to enforce a class-racist perspective in regard to socio-economic cooperation between Indian and Euro-Canadian. The major issues of land, band membership, enfranchisement and treaty rights were the subjects of a number of amendments during this time.

Land-related amendments to the Indian Act in 1908 included measures to facilitate surrender of reserve lands; in 1911 this was extended to ease expropriation of reserve land by municipalities and corporations. Expropriation of land for the purpose of establishing new reserves was also made available through the Expropriation Act of 1906.[1] An amendment to lease reserve land occurred in 1918 and in 1919, location tickets on reserve land were provided for Indian veterans of the Canadian military.[2]

Other treaty-related issues which received amendments included the introduction of mandatory medical treatment, the control of produce and livestock production and marketing, and the prohibition against attending and/or participating in rodeos, dances and exhibitions, all in 1914.[3] In 1917, the Indian and Metis people were subject to the Migratory Birds Convention Act which prohibited them from hunting fowl at any time of the year.[4] In 1920, annuities of Indian children were diverted to the payment of school expenses.[5] Mandatory attendance was also enforced for all students between the ages of 7 and 15. In 1927, an amendment allowed DIA to hold certain Indian students until the age of 18. This amendment was part of the new 1927 consolidated act superseding the statute of 1906.

Hunting, fishing and trapping rights were increasingly restricted in 1930 with the passing of An Act Respecting the Transfer of the Natural Resources of Alberta which did not permit Indian people to pursue their traditional livelihoods on occupied crown land.[6] Corporations who leased crown land were thus unobstructed in the exploitation of the land.[6] These acts ultimately served to alienate the aboriginal people while simultaneously catering to the wishes of the government-corporate structure of national, provincial and local development.

From 1905 to 1930, major waves of settlers came to occupy lands in the Saddle Lake and Goodfish Lake region. Ukrainian and American settlers were the first to arrive in

the mid 1890s at Beaverhill Lake and the Vermilion River valley south of the North Saskatchewan River.[7] By 1905, Ukrainian settlement had nearly reached the boundaries of the Saddle Lake reserve from the south and the west. The British population also increased significantly in the region after 1905 with the completion of the CNR railway which joined Saskatoon and Edmonton. The emergence of the rural communities of Lloydminster, Vermilion, and Vegreville signalled a major transformation of the Saddle Lake region with a deeper penetration of roads, railways, townsites, and sectional fencing into the region.

Besides Ukrainian, American and British settlers, French-Canadians, primarily from Quebec, came 'en masse' in 1909 and in smaller groups afterwards. They settled in and around St. Paul des Metis and other, smaller communities including St. Edouard and St. Vincent (Figure 6.1).[8]

St Paul des Metis was originally initiated in 1895 by the Roman Catholic church and the federal government as a 'model' half-breed agricultural colony where settlers held usufructuary rights to the land.[9] The land thus remained in the Crown's possession. According to Albert Lacombe, the principal cleric on the Board of Management of the colony, the aim of the settlement was to:

> ...réunir les Metis dans une colonie, sur des terres dont ils auront l'usufruit sans en avoir la propriété; par consequent incapables de les vendre ou de les hypothequer ; cette colonie sous le

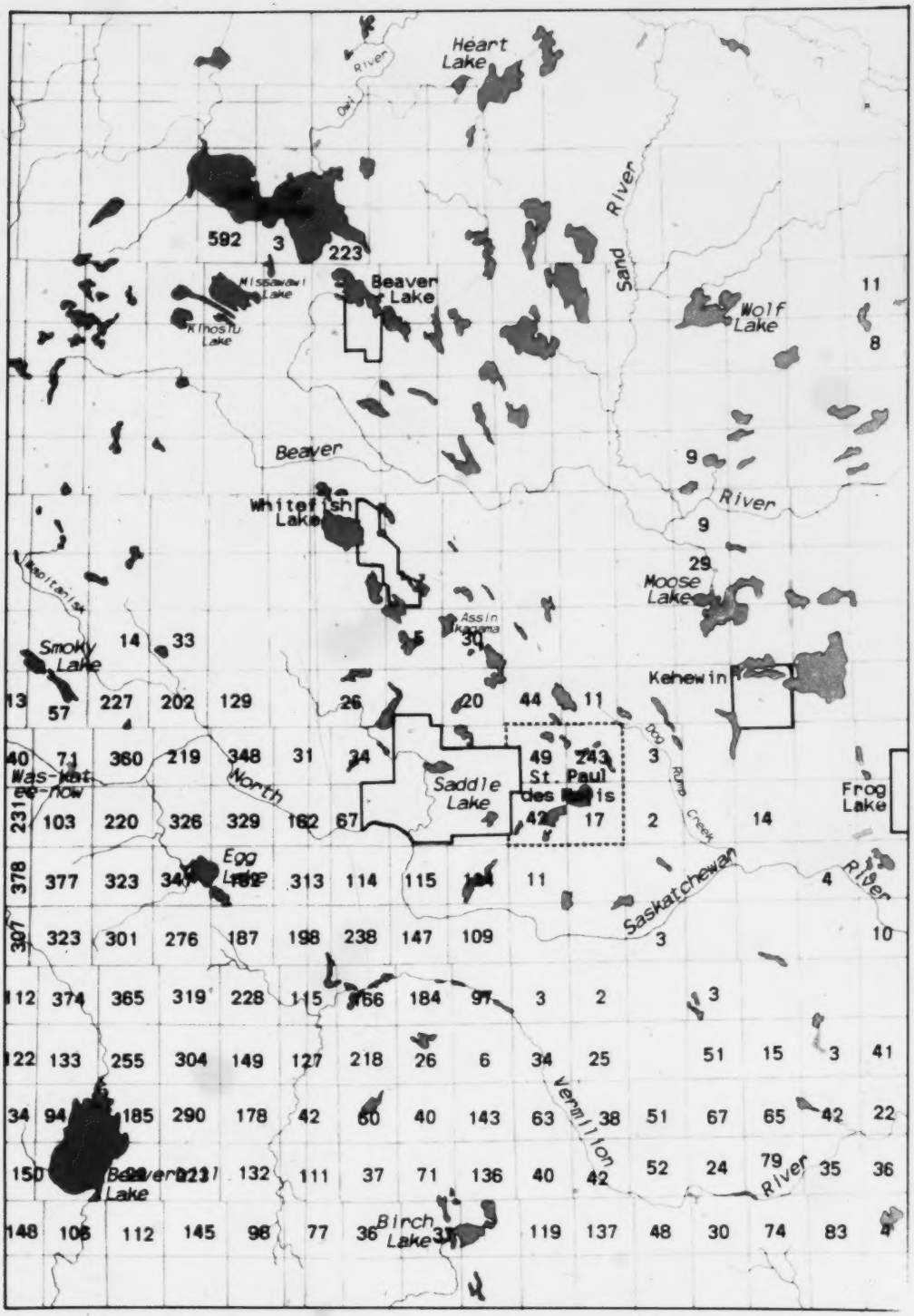


Figure 6.1 :Population in North Central Portion of Treaty Six, 1906

Source : Government of Canada, Alberta Census Map, Department of Agriculture, 19

> controle exclusif d'un syndicat composé de la hierarchie catholique du Manitoba et du Nord-Ouest et de quelques laiques dévoués.[10]

An Order-in-Council dated the 28th of December, 1895, permitted the Metis to use four townships adjacent to the eastern border of the Saddle Lake reserve (Figure 6.1). Families began to arrive shortly afterwards from Duhamel, Battle River, Buffalo Lake and other places. In 1896, eight families were reported to have been residing at the colony. The following year, ten more families arrived. In 1901, fifty-two families were reported to be usufructuary land holders and in 1904, the colony peaked with eighty families resident.[11]

The inability of the church to solicit enough funds for agricultural machinery undermined the success of the colony.[12] Trading with Saddle Lake and Onion Lake and other bands did occur at the colony and there were plans to supply DIA agencies with flour and bacon. It is doubtful, however, that the necessary contracts ever materialized because the production levels of the colony were maintained at or below subsistence levels.

The role of the Catholic church in the development of the colony remained distant throughout the duration of the project. While the clergy advocated usufructuary rights for the Metis people, the simultaneous belief in private land property by the clergy compromised the validity of the usufructuary rights and left the determining law to the the

government who maintained the order through the proprietary rights ethic of the state.

With the increase of Euro-Canadian settlers moving into the Saddle Lake region after 1905, the Catholic church was increasingly placed under pressure by the government and the settlers to open the Metis Colony to the general public. The church advised the Metis to claim their own parcels and to agree to surrender the 'unused' portion back to the government.

By 1909, the government rescinded the Order-in-Council of 1895 and offered resident Metis conditional terms of agreement, under the provisions of the Homestead Act, to accept probationary patent parcels of eighty acres or one hundred and sixty acres in lieu of their previously held usufructuary rights. Applications for homestead grants were approved according to permanence of residency and improvements on the parcels. Of the eighty-six Metis applicants, sixty-five were approved.[13] Twenty-one applicants were disapproved. While the settlement of claims between the Metis and the government included eighth-section and quarter-section parcels, Euro-Canadian settlers ordinarily received quarter-sections rather than the eighty acres many Metis were coerced into accepting.

For its part as the government's Board of Management in the usurpation of the Metis Colony, the Catholic church received two thousand five hundred and sixty acres in fee simple.[14] The church property was centrally located in the

colony and was sold, over time, to the residents, businesses and town of St. Paul des Metis.

The construction of the Canadian National Railway in northeastern Alberta from 1917 to 1920 connected Edmonton to St. Paul des Metis.[15] Although many roads had been constructed by this time to accommodate rapidly expanding motor vehicle transport, the railway was the major attraction for settlers. The CNR also included the communities of Smoky Lake and Ashmont on its line but Saddle Lake and Goodfish Lake were by-passed. The population of the communities linked to the railway grew considerably as did the number of businesses, but Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake were prevented by their isolation as well as by government policy from sharing in this economic expansion.[16]

This economic isolation was reinforced by the ongoing enforcement of the "pass system" and the ban against participation in rodeos, all of which militated against co-operative activities between Amerindians and Euro-Canadians.[17] Because of this enforcement, Indians were not often frequenters of Euro-Canadian communities.

The marginalisation of the Indian economy can be described more succinctly during this time, in its relative position with other sectors of the Euro-Canadian population. An analysis of real property valuations in 1915 within Alberta indicates that the farms of the Saddle Lake agency held significantly lower real property values than the average Euro-Canadian farms in the districts of Battle River

and Victoria and in Alberta, generally.[18] Comparative farm produce values indicated that Alberta farms had an annual (1915) average produce value of $3297.82 ; Battle River farms, $2640.37 ; Victoria farms, $2807.46, and Saddle Lake farms, $1089.26 (Table 6.1).[19] Saddle Lake farms were thus producing at approximately 33% of the Alberta farm average. The value of wheat, oats and potato production was 4.4%, 17.6%, and 32.5% of the Alberta farm averages, respectively, while the value of milch cows, horses, calves and swine were 46.1%, 60.8%, 82.1% and 11.1% of the Alberta farm averages, respectively.

Real property valuations began to decrease significantly after 1915 in the Saddle Lake agency until 1918 when the values began to increase again at the rate of 4% per annum to reach a second but lower valuation peak in 1922 (Figure 6.2). After 1922, the personal property valuations, especially in livestock and produce, dropped drastically until 1924. The decrease in the valuations beginning in 1915 and 1922 both correspond with an increase in livestock numbers subsequent to those years (Figure 6.3). The valuation peaks do correspond with an increase in bushels of grain harvested, but after 1922, the relationship becomes increasingly inverse where bushels of grain continue to increase but produce valuations continue to decrease (Figure 6.4). These trends would indicate that valuations of Indian real property were inversely tied to the increase in the material size of the property.

| Alberta | Battle River | Victoria | Saddle Lake | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 67, 977 | 10,181 | 8024 | 88 | Number of Farms |
| $55,094,424 | $6,083,764 | $7,492,578 | $26,600 | Value of Buildings |
| $810.49 | $597.56 | $933.77 | $302.27 | Value of Buildings/Farm |
| $366,216,578 | $37,665,198 | $35,832,103 | $586,105 | Value of Farmland |
| $5387.40 | $3699.55 | $4465.62 | $6660.28 | Value of Farmland/Farm |
| $40,979,062 | $5,691,356 | $5,669,262 | $19,550 | Value of Implements |
| $602.84 | $559.02 | $706.54 | $212.16 | Value of Implements/Farm |
| $58,325,532 | $7,299,922 | $4,025,870 | $3372.16 | Value of Wheat |
| $858.02 | $717.01 | $501.73 | $38.32 | Value of Wheat/Farm |
| $25,532,862 | $3,432,292 | $3,569,863 | $5806.13 | Value of Oats |
| $375.61 | $337.13 | $444.90 | $65.97 | Value of Oats/Farm |
| $1,779,836 | $153,401 | $159,917 | $748.88 | Value of Potatoes |
| $26.18 | $15.07 | $19.93 | $8.51 | Value of Potatoes/Farm |
| $2,998,621 | $19,546 | $50,477 | $579.92 | Value of Hay |
| $43.97 | $1.92 | $6.29 | $6.59 | Value of Hay/Farm |
| $77,705,329 | $9,361,137 | $8,726,371 | $61,138.82 | Value of Horses |
| $1143.11 | $919.47 | $1087.53 | $694.76 | Value of Horses/Farm |
| $17,486,080 | $2,304,156 | $2,494,098 | $14,507.85 | Value of Milch Cows |
| $257.28 | $226.32 | $310.83 | $164.86 | Value of Milch Cows/Farm |
| $5,053,985 | $627,577 | $661,702 | $5441.88 | Value of Calves |
| $74.35 | $61.64 | $82.47 | $61.06 | Value of Calves/Farm |
| $27,964,504 | $3,057,291 | $1,928,754 | $3443.35 | Value of Other Cattle |
| $411.38 | $300.29 | $240.37 | $40.51 | Value of Other Cattle/Farm |
| $5,298,429 | $626,314 | $909,976 | $728.84 | Value of Swine |
| $77.94 | $61.52 | $113.41 | $8.68 | Value of Swine/Farm |

Table 6.1 : Farmland, Building, Implements, and Produce Values per Farm in Alberta, Battle River and Victoria Districts and Saddle Lake Agency, 1915
Source : Government of Canada, Census of Prairie Provinces, 1916
Canada Sessional Papers, Department of Indian Affairs, 1916 and 1917

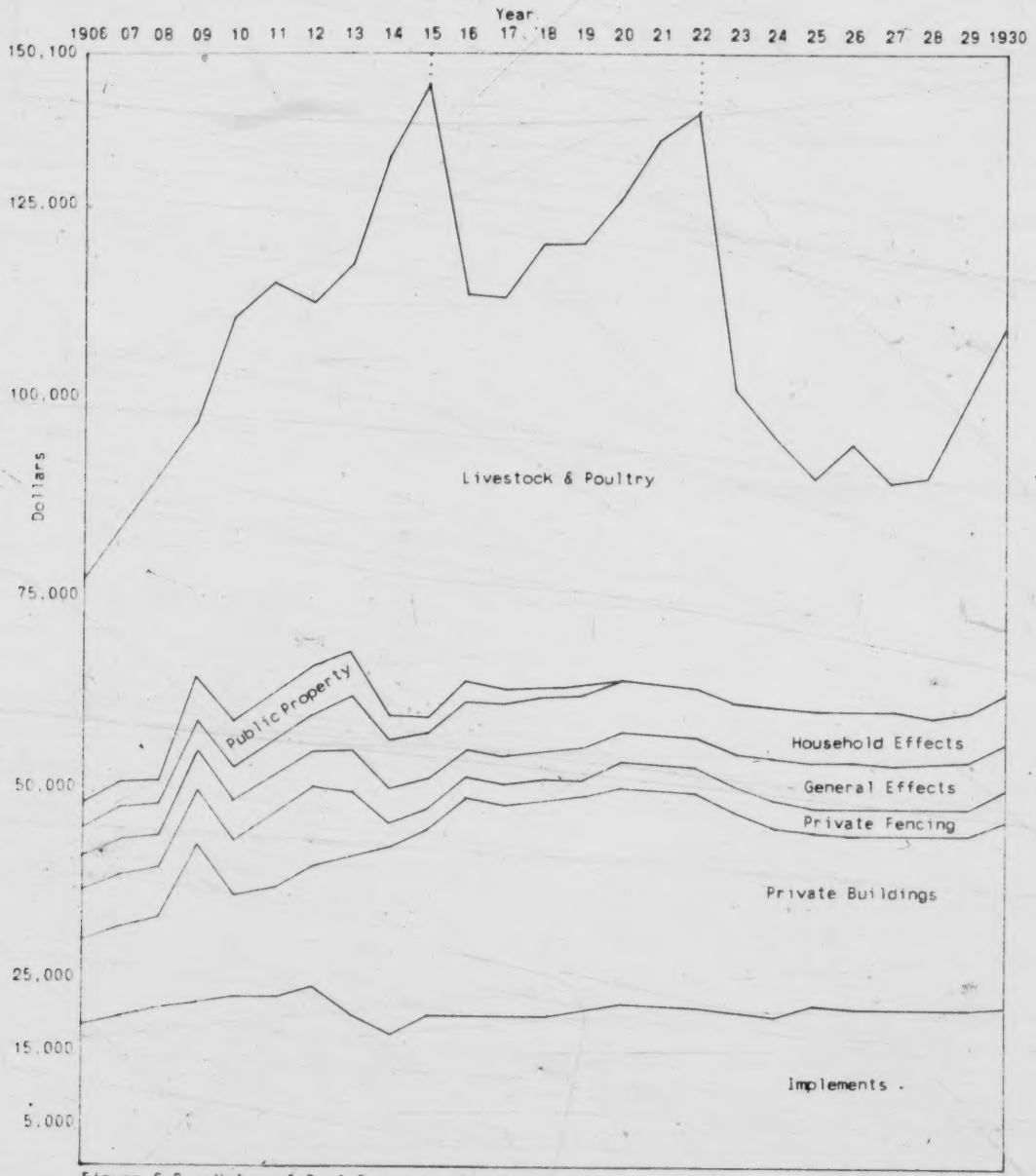


Figure 6.2 : Value of Real Property, Saddle Lake Agency, 1906-1930
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1907-1931

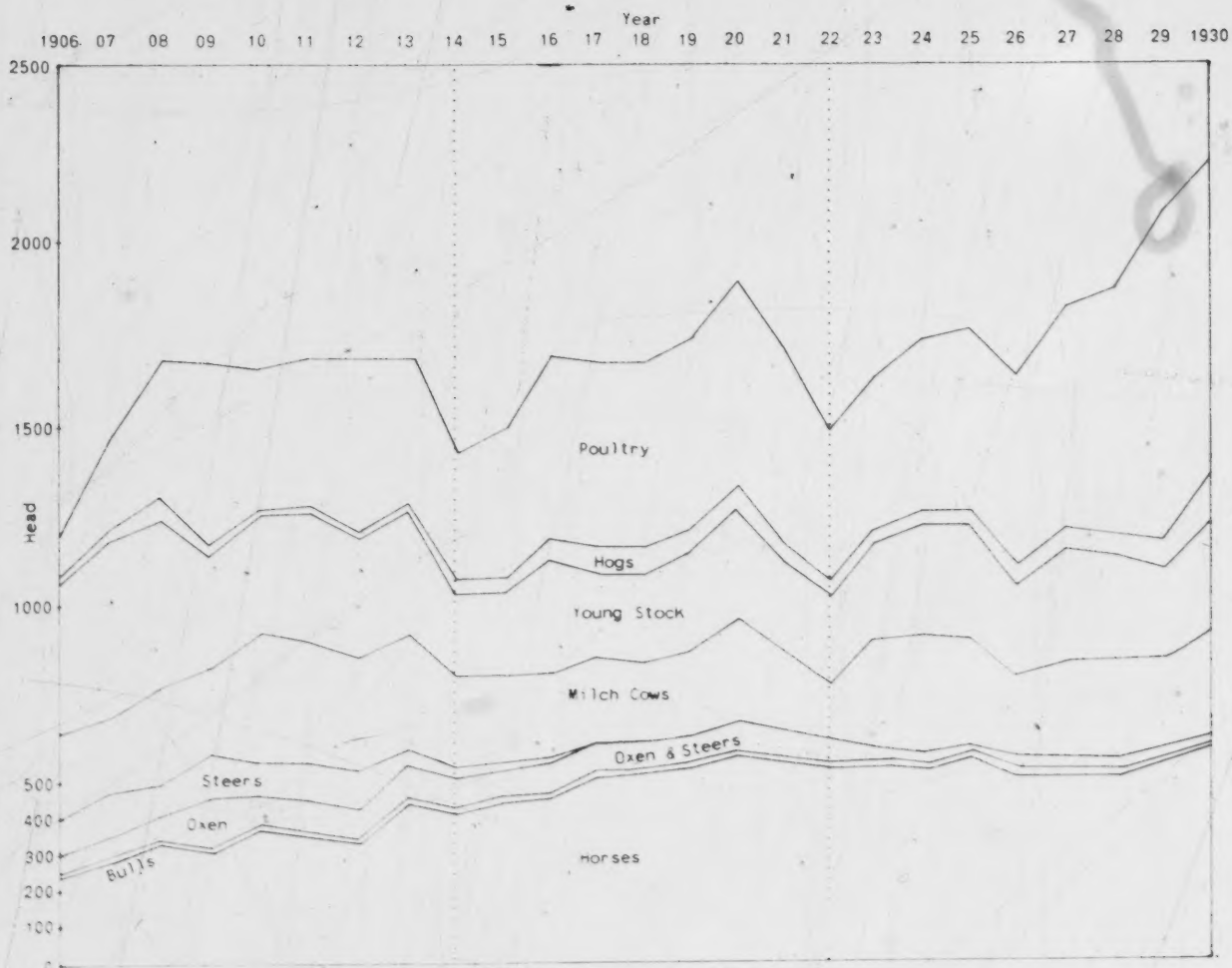


Figure 6.3 Livestock and Poultry, Saddle Lake Agency, 1906-1930
Source: Canada Sessional Papers, 1907-1931

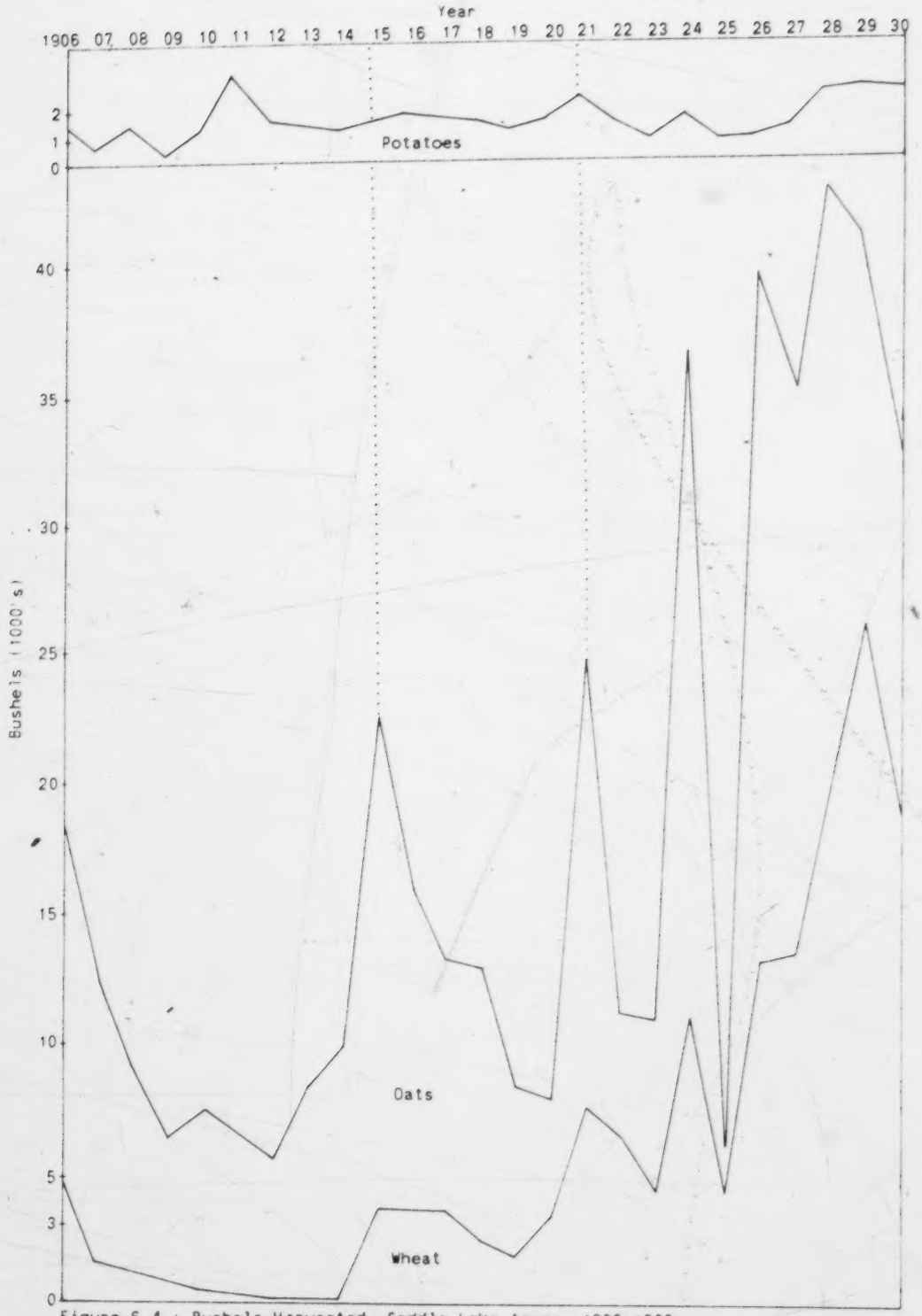


Figure 6.4 : Bushels Harvested, Saddle Lake Agency, 1906-1930
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1908-1932

This appraisal of real property value affected Euro-Canadian people as well since the cyclical construction of the capitalist economy tended to marginalise small producers proportionately more than large-scale commercial farmers. Credit facilities based on personal property were thus difficult to secure, given the decrease in personal property value.

The arrangement of credit for Saddle Lake band members was doubly difficult at best when the Canadian government allowed the Governor-in-Council to provide loans to band members not exceeding "one-half of the appraised value" of "the borrower's landed interests".[20] This 1924 Indian Act amendment provided some possibility of Indian farmer participation in conventional agricultural financing but the fluctuating course of the appraised property value did not allow for substantial flows of liquid capital to materialize for Indian farmers.

The expenditures of DIA between 1905 and 1930 also reflect the intent of the government to control the evolution of the Indian economy (Figure 6.5). The proportion of agricultural expenses decreased in both dollar value and in proportion of total budget from $2 per capita (5.5% of budget) in 1906 to $1.25 per capita (2.2% of budget) in 1930. The bulk of DIA expenses continued to shift toward education and in 1910, medical expenses were added to the budget. Medical expenses quickly became the third largest expenditure after education and general expenses. Apart from

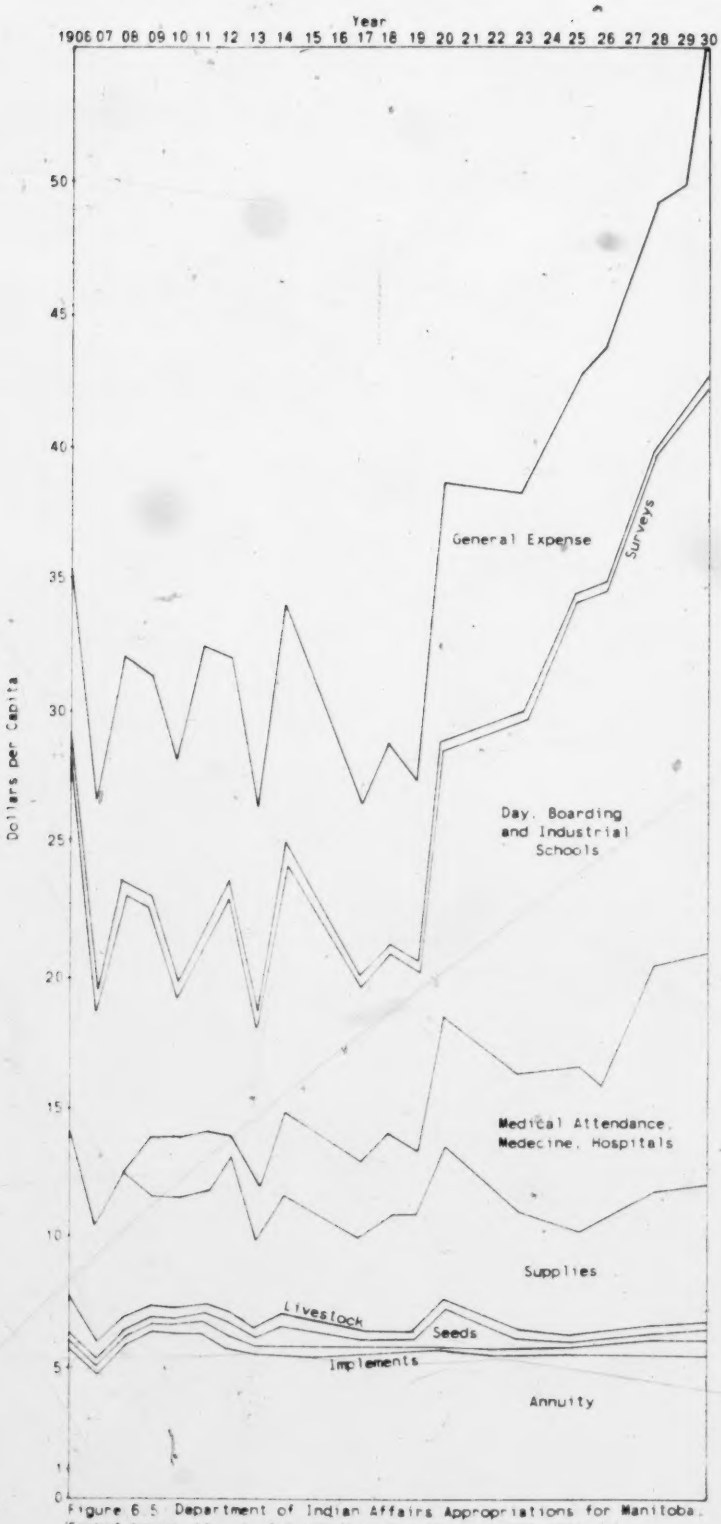


Figure 6.5 Department of Indian Affairs Appropriations for Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta & North West Territories 1906-1930
Source : Canada Sessional Papers, 1908-1932

these three categories, the only other major DIA expenses in the budget were annuities at approximately $5.00 per capita per annum and supplies for "destitute and working Indians" at approximately $4.00 per capita per annum. Supplies were often distributed at annuity time. These two expenditures would thus correlate in their dollar value consistency between 1906 and 1930.

The unequal condition of the Indian-Euro-Canadian economic relationship was increasingly polarized by the cyclical pattern of European warfare and its effects in Canada from 1914 to 1919. Although Indian men were not conscripted by virtue of treaty rights, approximately 35% of the Indian men who qualified for military duty volunteered to participate in the First World War.[21] Alberta bands had nine men enlisted in 1916 and certain bands in western Canada had nearly 50% of their qualified men in military uniform. The majority of the men who enlisted, however, were from Ontario.

Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake and other Indian bands contributed minimally to Canadian war fund drives during the war years.[22] This would probably reflect their disinterest in the "war effort" given the material and psychological conditions under which they were regularly forced to live. The enfranchisement of the Indian men who served in the Canadian military reduced significantly the number of Treaty Indians in Canada.[23] This reduction placed greater stress still on the remaining treaty Indians since the circulation

of capital and money from DIA was based on per-capita expenditures. Thus the Indian people's accessibility to the general economy remained acutely marginal during and after the years of the First World War.

The First World War decreased the settlement rate in western Canada, but the Saddle Lake region continued to increase in Euro-Canadian population during the war years. The introduction of "Greater Production" agricultural campaigns by the Canadian government on certain reserves was meant to demonstrate the willingness of the Indian people to contribute to the "war effort" but these campaigns were manipulated by the government to increase the accessibility of Indian lands to non-Indian leasing and ultimately, to the surrender of portions of the reserves.[24] Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake were not participants of the campaigns but their crop production nevertheless, did increase in the post-war years (Figure 6.4). The government maintained, however, that Indian reserves were not being fully utilized and were thus open to surrender.[25]

The main proponents of Indian land surrender were DIA, the Department of the Interior and the Soldier Settlement Board which was established under the Soldier Settlement Act of 1918.[26]

The extension of the surrender policy after 1905 concentrated on the prairie provinces and almost all of the bands lost 25% or more of their reserve land before the beginning of the First World War in 1914, nine years

later.[27]

The surrender of land in Saddle Lake was one of the last major Indian reserve land surrenders in Canada. The surrender did not occur until 1925 but was linked to the settlement of soldiers from the First World War. Under the Soldier Settlement Act of 1918, the federal government selected a portion of the parkland belt in Saskatchewan and Alberta to be settled by soldiers. Although Saddle Lake was technically not within the boundaries of the area selected by the government, the Soldier Settlement Board arranged in 1925, with DIA to have a portion of the Saddle Lake Indian reserve surrendered to the Board:

> Your first field work will be the subdivision of 29.25 sections in the northeasterly part of the Saddle Lake Indian reserve... The area to be subdivided comprises those portions of townships 57-10-4, indicated on the enclosed blue-print. The portion outlined in red comprising those portions fourteen sections is being surveyed for and at the expense of the Soldier's Settlement Board. The balance of the subdivision comprising 15.25 sections is being done for and at the expense of the Department of Indian Affairs.[28]

The government's pretext of underutilisation to usurp reserve land is further complicated when it is evident that a considerable amount of arable land was already available throughout northeastern Alberta (Figure 6.6). This land

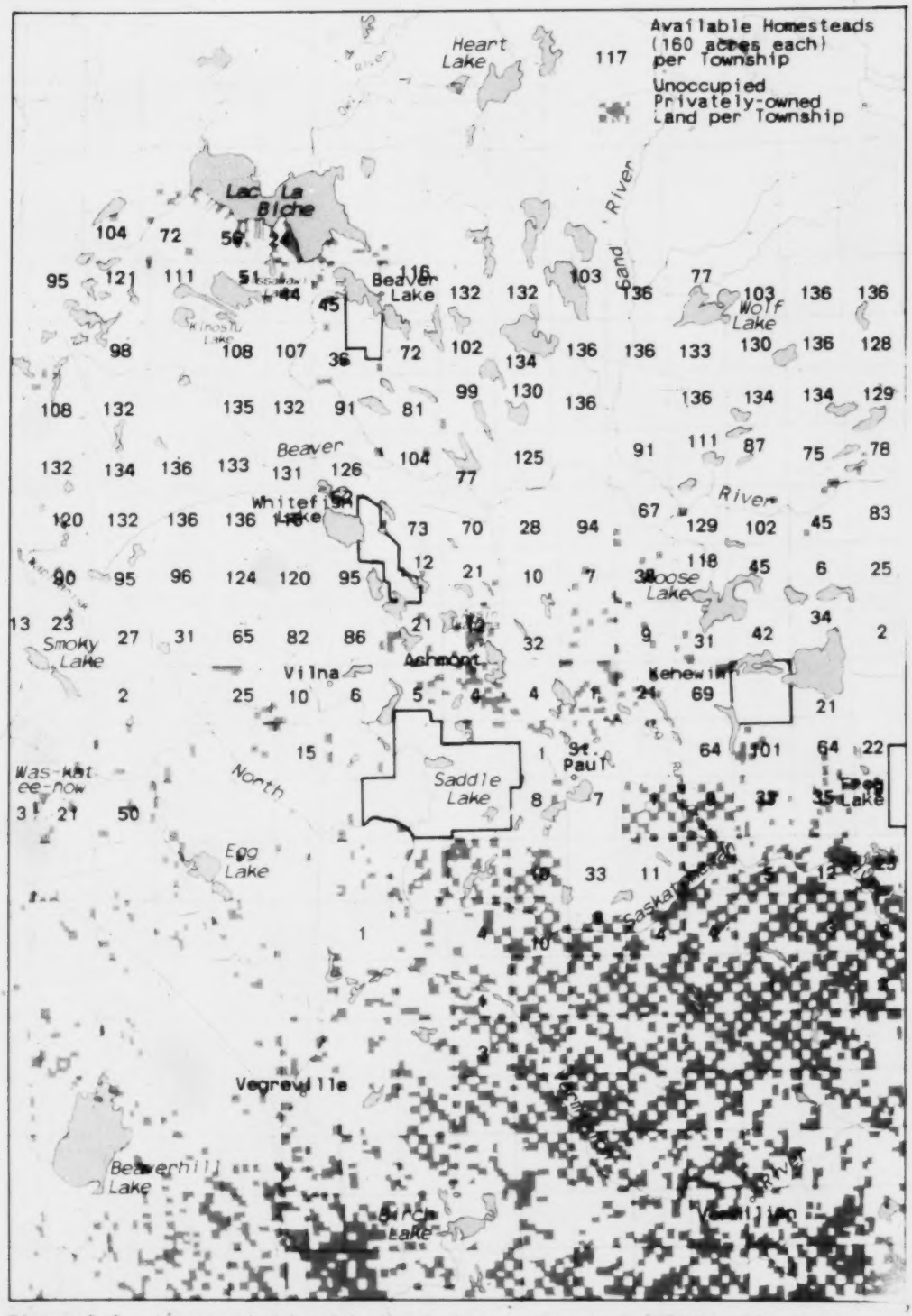


Figure 6.6 : Unoccupied Land in North Central Portion of Treaty Six, 1924
Source : Government of Canada, Department of Interior, Available Homestead Lands, 1924. Department of the Interior, Government of Canada, Disposition of Land, 1924

included numerous homesteads of 160 acres per grant, and corporate lands granted by the goverment to the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Hudson's Bay, and the Canda West Land (CPR subsidiary) corporations.[29] While the government still had thousands of quarter-sections available as homestead grants, the government instead chose to usurp Indian land because there was a "shortage" of good agricultural land as homestead grants. Since the corporate lands were being retained through speculation or sold at inflated market prices, these lands were also not easily acquired by prospective settlers.

Given the land ownership information network that existed in the 1920s the controlling interests in land ownwership played down the abundance of land by creating a "scarcity" through speculation. Thus, instead of increasing liquidity in the market and/or lowering the prices of available land, the emphasis was placed on the fallacy of exaggeration of "vacant" Indian reserve land which could be surrendered to help out the Euro-Canadian settler because there was a "shortage" of available land.[30]

The evidence indicates, to the contrary, that abundant agricultural land was definitely available and thus, the Saddle Lake band did not surrender a portion of their reserve because there was a "shortage", but because they were forced to do so under the military surveillance and seizure procedures of the Canadian government.

In summary, the early provincial period of Alberta brought a certain degree of prosperity to Euro-Canadian immigrant settlers but for Saddle Lake and Goodfish Lake, the new wave of foreign and domestic settlers brought a sense of encroachment, and at the same time, the Canadian government imposed isolation, economic sanctions and finally, in the mid 1920s, a major land surrender of a portion of the Saddle Lake Reserve. All of the previous tactics by DIA to economically and culturally stifle the aboriginal peoples continued unabated and uncontested. Ultimately, the Indian people would have to wait until the 1930s to develop militant political unions that would lobby more effectively the Canadian government.[31]

Notes

1. Statutes of Canada (SC), 1906, 5-6 Edward, Vol. III, pp. 2359-69. John Leslie and Ron Maguire (eds.), 1978, The Historical Development of the Indian Act, DIAND, Ottawa, p. 109

2. Leslie and Maguire, 1978, p. 114

3. Leslie and Maguire, 1978, p. 112

4. Dan Gottesman, 1983, "Native Hunting and the Migratory Birds Convention Act : Historical, Political and Ideological Perspectives" in Journal of Canadian Studies, 1983, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 67-89

5. Leslie and Maguire, 1978, p. 122. S. D. Grant, 1983, "Indian Affairs Under Duncan Campbell Scott : The Plains Cree of Saskatchewan, 1913-1931" in Journal of Canadian Studies, 1983, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 21-39

6. SC, 1930, 20-21 George V., cap. 3. Leslie and Maguire, 1978, p. 124

7. Orest Martynowych, 1985, The Ukrainian Bloc Settlement in East Central Alberta, 1890-1930, Alberta Culture, Edmonton, pp. 86-89

8. Emeric Drouin, 1964, Joyau dans la plaine, Editions Ferland, Quebec, pp. 270-272 Drouin mentions that by the end of 1907, at least 160 squatters were already occupying quarter-sections. It is not known how many of these settlers actually had proprietary rights through the Homestead Act.

9. The Catholic clergy modelled their colony according to

the Paraguayan *Reducciones* of the Jesuits who lived amongst the Guarani in the mid 1500s. These missions ultimately led to an accumulation of wealth by the Jesuits and to debt peonage for the Guarani. Gilda Sanders, 1980, "Some Selected Aspects of the Impact of the Churches on Metis Society and Economy, 1865-1905" in Metis Association of Alberta (ed.), Metis Land Rights, 1980, MAA, pp. 193-284 ; George Stanley, 1978, "Alberta's Half-Breed Reserve : Saint-Paul-des-Metis, 1896-1909" in Bruce Sealey and Antoine Lussier (eds.), The Other Natives : The Metis, 1978, Manitoba Metis Federation and Editions Bois-Brule, Winnipeg, pp. 75-108

10. Albert Lacombe, OMI, n.d., Memoire sur les Metis du Manitoba et du nord-ouest canadian, p. 2

11. Emeric Drouin, 1964, p. 150

12. Joe and Patricia Sawchuck, 1981, Metis Land Rights in Alberta, Metis Association of Alberta, pp. 168

13. PAC, RG 15, Vol. 708, File 360530 ; PAA, Item 1047 File 11150. Sanders, Gilda, 1980, "The Department of the Interior and the North-West Half-Breeds: Evidences of a Breach of Trust", Metis Association of Alberta, 1980, pp. 182-239

14. Maber to Oliver, April 12, 1909, PAC, RG 15, Vol. 708, File 360530

15. Orest Martynowych, 1985, p. 258

16. Statutes of Canada, 4-5 George V., cap. 35., p. 226 and 23-24 George V., cap. 42, p. 224 ; Scott to Meighen, PAC, PAA, RG 10, Vol. 4069, File 427063, June 26, 1919 : "The amendment of 1919 provides that... the Governor in council

may authorize and direct the expenditure of the capital funds of a band or for the purchase of permanent improvements upon the reserve for such works thereon or in connection therewith as would be of permanent value to the band... without the consent of a band."

17. Laurie Barron, 1988, "The Indian Pass System in the Canadian West, 1882-1935" in Prairie Forum, 1988, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 25-42

18. The only valuation where Saddle Lake agency farms surpassed Alberta farm averages was in land value where the Saddle Lake average was $6660.28 per acre and the Alberta farm average was $5387.40 (Table 6.1). Government of Canada, 1916, Census of the Prairie Provinces : 1916, pp. 288, 290 and 301; CSP, 1916, 6 George V., No. 27, p. 73 and 112

19. Government of Canada, 1916, pp. 288, 290, and 301; CSP, 1916, 6 George V., No. 27, pp. 112-113

20. Statutes of Canada, 14-15 George V., cap. 47, p. 167, sec. 90, subsec. 1. See also T.D. Regher, 1983, "Bankers and Farmers in Western Canada, 1900-1939", in John Foster, 1983, The Developing West, University of Alberta Press, Edmonton, pp. 303-336

21. Between 3,500 and 4,000 men enlisted out of a total possible group of 11,500. James Dempsey, 1983, "The Indians and World War One" in Alberta History, 1983, vol. 31, no.3, p. 2

22. CSP, DIA Annual Report, 1917-1920

23. The official Indian population of Canada remained

constant at 105,998 from 1917 to 1923 and decreased to 104,894 in 1924. CSP, DIA Annual Report, 1918-1925

24. Scott to Meighen, PAC, PAA, RG 10, Vol. 4069, File 427063, June 26, 1919 : "... government greater production farms have been established at the Blood, Blackfoot, Assiniboine, Crooked Lakes and Muscowpetung reserves. Many valuable tracts of Indian land had hitherto lain idle and the Indians in some cases refused to utilize their lands themselves and prevented anyone else from doing so by refusing to grant a surrender as was required by the Act."

25. Scott to Meighen, PAC, PAA, RG 10, Vol. 4069, File 427063

26. Statutes of Canada, 9-10 George V., cap. 71, 1917. Under the War Measures Act, the government legislated an Order-in-Council in 1919 to authorize the Soldier Settlement Board to purchase "uncultivated" Indian lands. In 1918, the Indian Act was amended to " allow certification of an Indian land surrender by any person in the area of authority to take affidavits" according to Leslie and Maguire (1978), p. 115. John McDonald, 1981, "Soldier Settlement and Depression Settlement in the Forest Fringe of Saskatchewan" in Prairie Forum, 1981, Vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 35-55

27. Treaty Six bands which surrendered land as a percentage of their total reserve area in Alberta as of July 10, 1914 were: Michel, 9,905.44 acres (38.7 % of total); Alexis, 24.30 acres (.16%); White Whale Lake (Wabamun), 6,034.74 acres (28.8%); Alexander, 9,438 acres (35.6%); Stony Plain,

15,557 acres (54.6%); PassPassChase, 25,536 acres (100%); Samson, 7,400 acres (18.8%); Ermineskin, 14,517.2 acres (36.9%); Louis Bull, 5,308 acres (38.6%); Montana (Bobtail), 13,155.2 acres (65.3%); and Cold Lake, 10,412.10 acres (22.3%). PAA, Vol. 4048, File 357579 and Vol. 4072, File 431421

28. Peters to Christie, PAA, Acc. no. 85.34, Item 2128, File 18829, April 30, 1926. CSP, 1920, 10 George V., no. 27, p. 28. 9-10 George V., cap. 56, s. 4. Clause 198, addenda to the Indian Act, 1919, reads as follows : "The Soldier Settlement Board and its officers and employees shall, upon request of the Deputy Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, aid and assist him, to the extent requested, in the execution of the purposes of this Act, and the said Board may sell, convey and transfer to the said Deputy, for the execution of any such purposes, at such prices as may be agreed, any property held for disposition by such Board."

29. Chester Martin and A. S. Morton (1938), A History of Prairie Settlement and Dominion Lands Policy, Macmillan, Toronto; James Hedges (1939), Building the Canadian West, Russell and Russell, New York

30. Land density ratios in 1915 indicate that Saddle Lake farms had an average of 1332 acres while farms in the districts of Battle River and Victoria had averages of 269.03 and 256.88 acres, respectively. However, 216 farms in Battle River had an average of 1999.13 acres while in Victoria, 241 farms had an average of 1061.81 acres. The

most common ownwership of land amongst Euro-Canadians was the quarter-section of 160 acres. Given that improvements averaged 50 acres amongst Battle River and Victoria farmers and only 13.72 acres on Saddle Lake agency farms, the argument of "unused" Indian lands was also easily contrived. Scott to Meighen, RG 10, Vol. 4069, File 427063, June 26, 1919, PAA, PAC : " Many valuable tracts of Indian land had hitherto lain idle and the Indians in some cases refused to utilize their lands themselves and prevented anyone else from doing so by refusing to grant a surrender as was required by the Act."

31. Historical accounts of Indian activism before the 1950s can be found in Norma Sluman and Jean Goodwill, 1982, John Tootoosis: A Biography of a Cree Leader, Golden Dog Press, Ottawa and of Metis activism in Murray Dobbin, 1981, The One-and-a-Half-Men, New Star Books, Vancouver

## VII. Conclusion

The preceding five chapters have predominantly examined the 19th and early 20th century transformation of Saddle Lake First Nation from nomadic subsistance bands to sedentary reserve bands.

While this transformation had been difficult at the best of times, the consistancy and/or increase in the 20th century population numbers at Saddle Lake and Goodfish Lake indicate that the bands survived an international social crisis that had become, by 1870, a genocidal onslaught largely initiated by the military forces of the Canadian government.

In the contexts of both the frontier theory and the dependency theory, one can perceive specific examples of sequential occupation and socio-economic avoidance on the part of Euro-Canadian capitalism towards the aboriginal peoples, but both of these theories, in the end, do not explain fully the obstacles to the trans-cultural process which occurred before and after the Treaty Six agreement of 1876.

The Royal Proclamation of 1763, addressed by Britain to the Indian Nations of North America, has traditionally been regarded as one of the basic legal documents in North American history and the inter-cultural relationship has been drawn, to some extent, from this document.

Historically, however, inter-cultural relations between Indian and European people tended to stagnate in the

quagmire of Euro-Canadian concepts of racial superiority and most of the inter-cultural contact that did occur between Indian and Euro-Canadian people carried with it the burden of a long-standing dependency trading pattern that had begun with French traders and the HBC in 1670 and thereafter. The gradual expansion inland by the HBC and the NWC did reach the Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake region in the late 18th century approximately one to two generations after the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and from that time onwards, the North Saskatchewan Cree were faced with a long-term occupation of their territory by Euro-Canadians.

However, contrary to what Turner has contended in his frontier theory, the arrival of Euro-Canadians and their capital in the form of technology and institutions did not concomitantly advance a social democracy which included all peoples of the newly-occupied territories.

The exclusion of primarily aboriginal peoples from socio-economic interaction in Euro-Canadian capitalist expansion can be detailed under the following key issues :

1. The HBC trading, labour and land tenure policies.
2. The exclusivity of land transfer agreements between the HBC, the Canadian government and the British government.
3. The unilateral establishment of Canadian provincial and territorial governments.
4. The unilateral shaping of Indian Treaties by the Canadian and British governments.
5. The imposition of the Indian Act through DIA.

Each of these points will be briefly summarized below.

A number of authors mentioned previously have documented unfair trading and labour practices carried out by the HBC towards the Indian people. The principal reason why these practices developed and were maintained is found in the monopolistic-monopsistic control that the HBC had in Rupert's Land throughout most of the period from 1670 to 1870.

During that time, the North American interior was overexploited in terms of its animal population to the point of making the beaver and buffalo almost extinct. While harvesting practices had been carried out by the Indian and Metis people, the profits of the fur harvesting were taken up by the HBC. In return, the HBC supplied the aboriginal people with utensils, blankets and some weaponry, all of which was mass-produced in Britain and sent to North America for the fur trade. It was often reported by the Indians that these goods were substandard and were therefore not worth the beaver pelts or the buffalo hides that were traded for them. With the gradual disappearance of the beaver and the buffalo, traditional production of clothes, housing and utensils was compromised and the aboriginal people were forced to depend on the substandard products offered by the HBC.

By the beginning of the 19th century, the HBC had established trading forts throughout the northern North American interior. Wage labour became a common practice

throughout the HBC fur-trading empire and again, the aboriginal people were given inferior wages in comparison to European and Euro-Canadian employees.

The exclusion of definitive fee simple land titles to former employees who settled at Red River and at trading forts throughout the west also indicates that the HBC did not consider it important to recognize the long-standing services of its aboriginal employees. The provisional government of Louis Riel at Red River in 1869-1870 and the conflict over the HBC survey of land at Victoria in 1873 are examples of the ensuing conflicts because of HBC disregard for the inhabitants of its colony and territory.

Thus, with the transfer of Rupert's Land from the HBC to the Canadian government in 1869-1870, the aboriginal people were entirely ignored. Similarly, the establishment of the province of Manitoba in 1870 and the North West Territories in 1875 occurred without long-lasting aboriginal participation. Instead, treaties were to be negotiated.

Treaty Six is typical of the numbered treaties negotiated between the Canadian government and the Indian people in western Canada. Its contents provide for multiple and staggered land surrenders as well as the surrender of fundamental national Indian rights. Thenceforth, the aboriginal people occupying the ceded land would become wards of the Canadian state and would be subject to the Indian Act of 1876 which had been previously legislated in unconsolidated bills by the Canadian government to deal with

earlier surrendered Indian bands of eastern Canada. A number of compensations in the form of money, goods and services were offered in return for the land surrender by treaty.

Following the treaties, the Canadian government applied a unilaterally devised framework of race and class control in order to intervene between the socio-economic spheres of Indian and Euro-Canadian cultures in order to block the practicalities of a more fluid inter-racial economic alliance. Co-operation between Euro-Canadian and Indian peoples was thus misdirected and submerged in capitalist monetary values where work is paid and private property is bought and sold. Since these values are alien to aboriginal concepts of property, the schism of resultant conflicting values retarded an international civilian agreement to share in a fair way, land occupancy and economic practices related to land occupancy.

The presence of racist and class attitudes amongst the property-owning settlers and the government ultimately meant that the Indian people were at the mercy of both private and governmental usurpation of their treaty rights. While the treaties provided some degree of socio-economic protection for the Indian people in the form of agriculture, schooling, medical care and limited hunting, fishing and trapping rights, both the Treaty and the Indian Act controlled these and other socio-economic clauses to the point of diminishing the negotiated benefits of the treaty agreements.

The Indian Act dictated who was an Indian and how reserve land was to be utilized. It also dictated that reserve land was open to surrender. The Indian Act also controlled the band councils and the moneys that the Indian people were allowed to earn and to borrow.

Similarly, the Migratory Bird Convention Act (1917) and the Alberta Natural Resources Transfer Act (1930) controlled natural aboriginal harvesting rights. All of these and other legislative instruments intervened in the socio-economic progress of aboriginal peoples and impeded the development of a more functional economy within their communities.

Thus, the predominant statute orientation implied an intent on the part of the Canadian government, to dominate and diminish the collective and individual economic identity potentially existing amongst and between councils and members of the treaty region.

Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake were subjected, throughout the post-treaty period, along with every other Canadian Indian band, to this racism inherent in Canadian government Indian policy.

Apart from a short-lived period, 1895 to 1910, where Saddle Lake and Whitefish Lake were beginning to reach some degree of socio-economic parity with their Euro-Canadian rural neighbours, the years before and after this period were definitely skewed against Indian success in the Canadian economy. By 1930, after having been bureaucratically pillaged and plundered by the Canadian

government following the treaty agreement of 1876, Saddle Lake, Blue Quill, Goodfish Lake and Whitefish Lake were visibly impoverished in relation to a great number of their Euro-Canadian neighbours.

Thus, the democratic unfolding that was supposed to have accompanied frontier expansion as Turner had intimated in his frontier theory, cannot be acknowledged as having occurred in Canadian Indian communities. The increased level of dependency on the Canadian government by the Indian people provides substantial evidence that the Canadian government was systematically negligent by obstructing the development of a self-sustaining standard of living for the Indian people who, through the agreements of the treaty, had expected a fair and honest return for the sharing of their traditional land with Euro-Canadian people.

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